SATURDAY
March 28, 2026

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T.N. ASSEMBLY POLLS

Not a one-sided battle this time: Chidambaram

NEWS » PAGE 13

NEW LEADERSHIP

Balendra Shah sworn in as Nepal PM

WORLD » PAGE 16

MARKET SLUMP

Nifty, Sensex drop as crude rises to $111

BUSINESS » PAGE 15

SHIFTING GROUND

Anger on the banks of Musi

Riverfront project triggers eviction fears among residents

GROUND ZERO » PAGE 11

IPL OPENER

Defending champion RCB takes on SRH

SPORT » PAGE 18

NEARBY

Pahilwan retires from contest

BENGALURU
Congress rebel candidate Sadiq Pahilwan on Friday retired from the electoral contest in the byelection to the Davangere South Assembly constituency, scheduled to be held on April 9. » PAGE 6

Security arrangements reviewed for IPL

BENGALURU
Karnataka's Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh chaired a meeting with senior police officials and Karnataka State Cricket Association office-bearers to review safety measures for the IPL match to be played at M. Chinnaswamy stadium on Saturday. » PAGE 7

PROPERTYPLUS » PAGE 9

Petrol, diesel excise duty cut; prices won't change

Centre reduces duty on petrol, diesel by ₹10 a litre each, but says the move will not lower fuel prices; it says the cut aims at easing the fiscal hit on oil marketing companies due to high oil prices

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

The Union government on Thursday reduced the special additional excise duty on petrol and diesel by ₹10 a litre each, effectively bringing down the duty on diesel to zero and on petrol to ₹3 a litre. However, the move will not translate into lower fuel prices for consumers.

Instead, the government said the duty cut was aimed at reducing the fiscal hit that oil marketing companies were absorbing due to high and rising oil prices.

In response to a question from *The Hindu*, Vivek Chaturvedi, Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, said the reduction was expected to cost the exchequer ₹7,000 crore over the next 15 days.

The government also hiked the export duties on diesel to ₹21.5 a litre, and on ATF to ₹29.5 a litre. Mr. Chaturvedi said the government expected to add ₹1,500 crore to the exchequer through these hikes, which would mitigate some of the impact of the excise duty cuts on domestic petrol and diesel.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Fiscal cushion

Government cuts excise duty on fuel to ease OMC losses, but consumers see no relief at pumps

Fuel rush: Long queues seen at a petrol pump in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, on Friday.

- Oil marketing companies (OMCs) will not pass on **excise cuts** to consumers, govt. says
- The purpose of the cuts is to **reduce the losses** OMCs are facing
- Govt. estimates these losses to be **₹2,400 crore a day**
- Govt.'s net revenue loss due to tax cuts expected at around **₹5,500 crore per 15 days**
- Private sector OMC Nayara Energy has **raised petrol and diesel prices**

Centre hikes LPG allocation by 20%

NEW DELHI
Offering respite to entities, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas called for increased allocation of the hydrocarbon gas by another 20%, taking the total allocation of commercial LPG to 70% of pre-crisis levels. » PAGE 15

Trump extends pause on strikes

U.S. President Donald Trump said he is pausing any strike on Iran's power plants until April 6 and added that "talks" with the Islamic Republic are going "very well". "Talks are ongoing, and they are going very well," he wrote in a social media post. » PAGE 16

Vehicles stuck under snow after an avalanche hit the Srinagar-Leh National Highway near Zero Point at the Zojila Pass on Friday. ANI

5 killed as avalanche strikes Zojila Pass

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Five persons were killed and as many injured after an avalanche hit the high-altitude Zojila Pass, which connects the Kashmir Valley with Ladakh, on Friday.

Two more persons are feared trapped in the snow.

Officials said the avalanche, apparently triggered by bright sunlight, hit the Srinagar-Leh National Highway near Zero Point at the Zojila Pass in the afternoon, when several passenger vehicles were negotiating the snow-laden road. Eyewitnesses said a huge volume of snow came crashing down and buried some vehicles at an altitude of 3,580 metres.

Initial reports suggested that one vehicle was thrown off the road in the impact of the avalanche and a number of vehicles were left stranded in the snow.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

East, Central corporations present maiden budgets

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

For the first time since the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike was split into five corporations, East and Central corporations presented their maiden budgets on Friday.

The East corporation presented a budget with an outlay of ₹3,889.98 crore, with revenue from its own sources accounting for 86.2%. The Central corporation presented a budget with an outlay of ₹3,426.60 crore, with revenue from its own sources accounting for 68.3%. Both are raising municipal bonds worth ₹200 crore each. Central imposed a new tax on new khatas issued – 2% of the stamp duty for the property's registration.

North, West and South corporations will present their budgets on Saturday.

FULL REPORT ON » PAGE 2

Toll on State highways set to go up

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Road-users in Karnataka will have to shell out marginally more as toll across key State highways is set for a marginal revision of around 1-3%. In a relief, there is no increase for cars on major corridors, including the Bengaluru airport stretch; commercial and heavy vehicles will have to pay slightly more.

The revised toll will be effective from April 1, 2026.

While passenger vehicles remain largely unaffected, light commercial and heavy vehicles will bear the increase ranging between ₹5 and ₹25, roughly 2-3% across most plazas.

The toll will be revised at 58 of the 69 toll plazas across the State.

FULL REPORT ON » PAGE 4

No marks-based assessment for third language in SSLC exam

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

To reduce the academic pressure on SSLC students, the Karnataka government has decided not to award marks for the third language, including Hindi, in the final results. Instead, a grading system will be followed for the third language. This is applicable to the ongoing exam too.

'No pass or fail system'

Speaking at a press conference here on Friday, Minister for School Education and Literacy, Madhu Bangarappa, said, "Till now, the SSLC examination was conducted for 625 marks for six subjects. Hundred marks were allotted for the third language. Henceforth, there will be no pass or fail system for the third language. That is, the marks of the third language will not be considered for the final result. Instead, grading (for example: A, B, C, D) will be given," he added. "This new rule will apply to all third languages in the State curriculum, including Hindi, Sanskrit, Tulu, Marathi, Urdu, Arabic and others. An official order in this regard will be issued soon," the Minister stated.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 6

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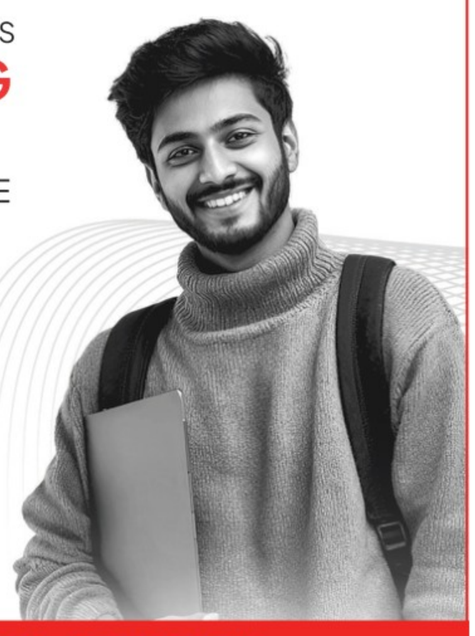

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GETTY IMAGES

Bruno Fernandes: not a cog in — but the wheel running — the wheel

The Manchester United captain has dragged his club into the Premier League's top three on the back of brilliant individual moments. With eight goals and 16 assists, he has won the Red Devils games even when they have been outplayed. If he can secure United's Champions League spot and break the Premier League's assists record, he will have had an all-timer of a season

Sports Bureau

Team sport is primarily about the success of the collective, about the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. But, every so often, an individual carries the collective. It's a particularly poignant theme in challenging circumstances – the untiring zeal of the sole saviour.

For a large portion of his career at Manchester United, Bruno Fernandes has played that part. Despite dealing with a chaotic environment, a revolving door of coaches and several teammates without his combination of talent and drive, Fernandes has excelled. He has won United matches with brilliant individual moments even when the team has been played off the park.

March madness

Just in March, the 31-year-old had a role in seven of United's eight goals across four Premier League matches. In the draw against Bournemouth, he helped put his side ahead twice, first with a penalty and then with an in-swinging corner that provoked an own goal. He supplied two assists in the 3-1 win over Aston Villa, a curled corner to the near post and a simply sublime pass into the Villa area. He scored and assisted in the 2-1 victory over Crystal Palace, a game in which United was trailing after just four minutes. He also had an assist in a defeat at Newcastle.

> Bruno just has the quality in the big moments. He's always in and around big moments. He's got his fingerprints on it most of the time
>
> **MICHAEL CARRICK**
> Man. United head coach

While March provided a miniature of his mastery, Fernandes has been enjoying a tremendous 2025-26 season. His performances have inspired a turnaround that has seen United climb to third on the Premier League table after at one point being just one bad game-week from the bottom half. Fernandes' 24 goal contributions (eight goals, 16 assists) in the league this season are second only to Erling Haaland's 29. His 16 assists are a Red Devils record in the Premier League era, surpassing David Beckham's previous mark of 15 in 1999-2000.

Fernandes' underlying metrics are, if anything, even more impressive. They point to an inexhaustible source of end product. He has created 101 chances in the league this season. The next best is 58 (Dominik Szoboszlai, Anton Stach, Declan Rice). No player has produced more chances from open play (73), made more successful passes into the penalty area (65), fashioned more big chances (24) or completed more through balls (13), as per Squawka.

The numbers bear out the many levers of threat he carries. Fernandes can break lines with an incisive pass, short-circuit the press by going over it with pinpoint accuracy, and carry the ball without losing steam, causing disorganisation in the opposition ranks, before sliding the dagger in. When he isn't generating big moments, he makes things easier for his teammates when they are under pressure. His ability to keep the ball long enough to trigger his marker to jump before slipping a runner into the space his 'gravity' has opened up is just one facet of this.

"Bruno can play so many different positions," United head coach Michael Carrick said. "He's just got the quality in the big moments, that composure, and can make the difference for us, and it's nothing new. He's always in and around big moments. He's got his fingerprints on it most of the time. His consistency of performances, his level of performances, his willingness to always put himself out there and physically being able to do it, there's a lot to credit him for in that respect."

> I could have gone a different way, won more trophies and people are talking about me differently. When we struggled the most, I stayed ... my loyalty was in the toughest periods
>
> **BRUNO FERNANDES**

Indeed, Carrick's arrival has liberated Fernandes, allowing him to do his best work in a roaming, freewheeling No. 10 role. Under Ruben Amorim, Fernandes was deployed deeper, tasked with controlling the game, not breaking it open. He also had more defensive responsibilities, which he accepted, saying, "You can put me anywhere on the pitch. If you want me to play wing-back, goalkeeper, centre-back, I will do it to the best of my abilities." But it wasn't the best use of him.

Top gear engaged

Unleashed by Carrick, Fernandes has found a gear that puts him among the very best in Europe's top five leagues. Those he plays with recognise that. "Everyone sees he can shoot, he can cross, he can do crazy ball," Bryan Mbeumo said. "Yeah, for a striker, you just enjoy that. On the pitch, when you're smart like he is, you don't even need to think a lot. You just need to make the run and he's going to play you in the right space every time."

At an individual level, the Portuguese maestro has been exceptional at United. He needed just 319 games to complete the double of 100 goals and 100 assists in all competitions for one club, faster than even Lionel Messi (338) and Cristiano Ronaldo (341). And yet, despite being a shining light and virtually ever-present during United's recent lean years, he hasn't always received the respect he deserves, not least from some of the club's legends.

He spoke last year of how a player's legacy is affected by the trophies they win, when perhaps other factors need to be considered as well.

"Nowadays people talk more like you are a better player or a worse player if you win or you lose trophies," he said on former United player Rio Ferdinand's podcast. "It changed a lot because if I look at the past, [Francesco] Totti is known as one of the best players in Italy and unfortunately for him he hasn't won many trophies. But I think if you look back everyone says he's one of the best that ever played for Italy.

"Totti at Rome, they haven't won since him. It hasn't changed much and he still is like the god of Rome. I think when we struggled the most, I stayed present to the club ... I think my loyalty was like in the toughest periods. So I'm very aware that I could have done a different path.

"I could have gone in a different way and probably won more trophies and people are talking about me in a different way because I've had trophies in my cabinet. But at the same time, I think everything I've done for the club in a certain way is still very important."

Chasing Henry, De Bruyne

United can still mathematically win the Premier League this season, but Fernandes has a shot at something more realistic. He has eight games remaining to register five more assists and break the Premier League record of 20, which Thierry Henry and Kevin De Bruyne hold.

If he can do that, in addition to securing United's Champions League spot, which looks very likely, Fernandes will have had one of the all-time great seasons – both as an individual and as an individual who carried a collective, adding immeasurably to the sum of its parts.

STACKING UP

ATP Men's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Carlos Alcaraz	22	13,550	18
2	Jannik Sinner	24	11,400	19
3	Novak Djokovic	38	5,370	18
4	Alexander Zverev	28	4,905	22
5	Lorenzo Musetti	24	4,365	22
6	Alex de Minaur	27	4,185	22
7	Taylor Fritz	28	4,170	23
8	Felix Auger-Aliassime	25	4,000	26
9	Ben Shelton	23	3,860	22
10	Daniil Medvedev	30	3,610	24
11	Alexander Bublik	28	3,385	25
12	Casper Ruud	27	2,715	22
13	Jakub Mensik	20	2,650	22
14	Flavio Cobolli	23	2,520	29
15	Karen Khachanov	29	2,410	24

Top Indians ▶

Sumit Nagal
Rank 278 ▲ 4 spots

Aryan Shah
Rank 414 ▲ 2 spots

WTA Women's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Aryna Sabalenka	27	11,025	20
2	Elena Rybakina	26	7,783	22
3	Iga Swiatek	24	7,413	20
4	Coco Gauff	22	6,748	20
5	Jessica Pegula	32	6,678	22
6	Amanda Anisimova	24	6,180	21
7	Jasmine Paolini	30	4,232	20
8	Elina Svitolina	31	4,020	16
9	Victoria Mboko	19	3,351	21
10	Mirra Andreeva	18	3,066	20
11	Ekaterina Alexandrova	31	2,918	26
12	Belinda Bencic	29	2,803	19
13	Linda Noskova	21	2,801	23
14	Karolina Muchova	29	2,668	16
15	Naomi Osaka	28	2,434	21

Top Indians ▶

Sahaja Yamalapalli
Rank 391 ▲ 2 spots

Vaishnavi Adkar
Rank 397 ▲ 71 spots

English Premier League Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Arsenal	31	21	7	3	61	22	39	70
2	Man. City	30	18	7	5	60	28	32	61
3	Man. United	31	15	10	6	56	43	13	55
4	Aston Villa	31	16	6	9	42	37	5	54
5	Liverpool	31	14	7	10	50	42	8	49
6	Chelsea	31	13	9	9	53	38	15	48
7	Brentford	31	13	7	11	46	42	4	46
8	Everton	31	13	7	11	37	35	2	46
9	Fulham	31	13	5	13	43	44	-1	44
10	Brighton	31	11	10	10	41	37	4	43
11	Sunderland	31	11	10	10	32	36	-4	43
12	Newcastle	31	12	6	13	44	45	-1	42
13	Bournemouth	31	9	15	7	46	48	-2	42
14	Crystal Palace	30	10	9	11	33	35	-2	39
15	Leeds United	31	7	12	12	37	48	-11	33
16	N. Forest	31	8	8	15	31	43	-12	32
17	Tottenham	31	7	9	15	40	50	-10	30
18	West Ham	31	7	8	16	36	57	-21	29
19	Burnley	31	4	8	19	33	61	-28	20
20	Wolves	31	3	8	20	24	54	-30	17

Italian Serie A Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Inter Milan	30	22	3	5	66	24	42	69
2	AC Milan	30	18	9	3	47	23	24	63
3	Napoli	30	19	5	6	46	30	16	62
4	Como	30	16	9	5	53	22	31	57
5	Juventus	30	15	9	6	52	29	23	54
6	Roma	30	17	3	10	40	23	17	54
7	Atalanta	30	13	11	6	41	27	14	50
8	Lazio	30	11	10	9	31	28	3	43
9	Bologna	30	12	6	12	38	36	2	42
10	Sassuolo	30	11	6	13	36	40	-4	39
11	Udinese	30	11	6	13	35	42	-7	39
12	Parma	30	8	10	12	21	38	-17	34
13	Genoa	30	8	9	13	36	42	-6	33
14	Torino	30	9	6	15	34	53	-19	33
15	Cagliari	30	7	9	14	31	42	-11	30
16	Fiorentina	30	6	11	13	35	44	-9	29
17	Cremonese	30	6	9	15	25	44	-19	27
18	Lecce	30	7	6	17	21	40	-19	27
19	Verona	30	3	9	18	22	52	-30	18
20	Pisa	30	2	12	16	23	54	-31	18

Spanish LaLiga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Barcelona	29	24	1	4	78	28	50	73
2	Real Madrid	29	22	3	4	63	26	37	69
3	Villarreal	29	18	4	7	54	34	20	58
4	Atletico Madrid	29	17	6	6	49	28	21	57
5	Real Betis	29	11	11	7	44	37	7	44
6	Celta Vigo	29	10	11	8	41	35	6	41
7	Real Sociedad	29	10	8	11	44	45	-1	38
8	Getafe	29	11	5	13	25	31	-6	38
9	Athletic Club	29	11	5	13	32	41	-9	38
10	Osasuna	29	10	7	12	34	35	-1	37
11	Espanyol	29	10	7	12	36	44	-8	37
12	Valencia	29	9	8	12	32	42	-10	35
13	Girona	29	8	10	11	31	44	-13	34
14	Rayo Vallecano	29	7	11	11	28	35	-7	32
15	Sevilla	29	8	7	14	37	49	-12	31
16	Alaves	29	8	7	14	30	41	-11	31
17	Elche	29	6	11	12	38	46	-8	29
18	Real Mallorca	29	7	7	15	34	47	-13	28
19	Levante	29	6	8	15	34	48	-14	26
20	Real Oviedo	29	4	9	16	20	48	-28	21

German Bundesliga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Bayern	27	22	4	1	97	25	72	70
2	Dortmund	27	18	7	2	58	28	30	61
3	Stuttgart	27	16	5	6	56	36	20	53
4	RB Leipzig	27	15	5	7	53	35	18	50
5	Hoffenheim	27	15	5	7	54	39	15	50
6	Leverkusen	27	13	7	7	52	36	16	46
7	E. Frankfurt	27	10	8	9	50	51	-1	38
8	SC Freiburg	27	10	7	10	39	44	-5	37
9	Union Berlin	27	8	7	12	31	46	-15	31
10	FC Augsburg	27	9	4	14	33	50	-17	31
11	Mainz	27	7	9	11	33	42	-9	30
12	Hamburg	27	7	9	11	31	40	-9	30
13	M'gladbach	27	7	8	12	33	46	-13	29
14	Werder	27	7	7	13	30	47	-17	28
15	Cologne	27	6	8	13	38	47	-9	26
16	St Pauli	27	6	6	15	24	44	-20	24
17	Wolfsburg	27	5	6	16	35	57	-22	21
18	Heidenheim	27	3	6	18	27	61	-34	15

Test Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Joe Root	880	932
2	Harry Brook	857	898
3	Travis Head	853	884
4	Steve Smith	831	947
5	Kane Williamson	822	919
6	Kamindu Mendis	781	784
7	Temba Bavuma	775	806
8	Yashasvi Jaiswal	750	858
9	Saud Shakeel	734	787
10	Shubman Gill	730	807

Test Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Jasprit Bumrah	879	908
2	Noman Ali	843	853
3	Mitchell Starc	838	852
4	Matt Henry	836	853
5	Pat Cummins	832	914
6	Marco Jansen	825	825
7	Scott Boland	820	820
8	Kagiso Rabada	807	902
9	Josh Hazlewood	775	864
10	Nathan Lyon	753	812

ODI Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Daryl Mitchell	840	840
2	Virat Kohli	791	908
3	Ibrahim Zadran	756	756
4	Rohit Sharma	748	879
5	Shubman Gill	716	841
6	Babar Azam	684	894
7	Shai Hope	679	782
7	Harry Tector	679	730
9	K.L. Rahul	664	676
9	Salman Agha	664	664

ODI Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	705	775
2	Jofra Archer	649	682
3	Keshav Maharaj	645	737
4	Bernard Scholtz	630	631
5	Adil Rashid	629	671
6	Josh Hazlewood	626	725
7	Mehidy Hasan	624	722
7	Maheesh Theekshana	624	680
7	Kuldeep Yadav	624	757
10	Mitchell Santner	617	656

T20I Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Abhishek Sharma	875	931
2	Ishan Kishan	871	871
3	Sahibzada Farhan	848	848
4	Phil Salt	792	881
5	Pathum Nissanka	766	796
6	Tilak Varma	742	845
7	Suryakumar Yadav	722	912
8	Tim Seifert	719	749
9	Jos Buttler	716	794
10	Dewald Brevis	709	738

T20I Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	753	828
2	Varun Chakaravarthy	740	818
3	Abrar Ahmed	736	757
4	Adil Rashid	721	747
5	Jasprit Bumrah	702	783
6	Adam Zampa	682	746
7	Corbin Bosch	676	745
8	Matthew Forde	667	679
9	Mustafizur Rahman	665	718
10	Mujeeb Ur Rahman	663	757

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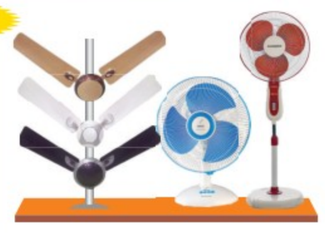

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Bengaluru civic budgets
2026-27
Budget at a glance
Budget outlay
₹3,426.60 cr.
Central corporation
East corporation
Budget outlay
₹3,889.9 cr
Grants from State and Centre
₹884.50 cr.
₹534 cr.
Property tax + cess
₹1,406.80 cr.
₹1,500 cr.
Corporation's revenue
₹2,342.20 cr.
₹3,354 cr.
After the erstwhile BBMP was split into five corporations, these are the maiden budgets. The intent to widen their revenue bases is very evident in both these budgets. If the base is widened, more things can be done. The direction of spending can be calibrated any day.
V. RAVICHANDAR, Member, Brand Bengaluru Committee
A city budget prepared without meaningful citizen participation is a hollow exercise. Any financial plan that fails to incorporate inputs from residents at the area sabha and ward levels fails to reflect the real needs and priorities of Bengaluru.
SRIKANTH NARASIMHAN, Bengaluru Navanirmana Party

Central corporation's maiden ₹3,426.60 crore budget bets on healthcare

Road infrastructure development works take more than 60% of the budget; market infrastructure is another area of focus, with ₹90 crore allocated for redevelopment

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

To tackle emergency service delays in traffic-clogged central Bengaluru, the Central City Corporation announced the introduction of bike ambulances to help affected within the critical "golden hour" as part of its maiden budget 2026-27 on Friday, with broader emphasis on road infrastructure, healthcare expansion and market redevelopment while presenting a surplus budget.

Presenting its first budget, the corporation pegged total receipts at ₹3,427.34 crore and expenditure at ₹3,426.60 crore, projecting a marginal surplus of ₹78.65 lakh.

Maheshwar Rao, Chief Commissioner, GBA, and Rajendra Cholan, Commissioner, Bengaluru Central City Corporation, ahead of the budget presentation on Friday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Healthcare expansion

Apart from focus on road infrastructure, with development works taking more than 60% of the budget, healthcare expansion was one of key focuses under the budget under the 'Brand Bengaluru - Healthy Bengaluru' initiative. An allocation of ₹40 crore has been made to upgrade seven maternity hospitals into 30-bed First Referral Unit (FRU) Community Health Centres (CHCs), and one hospital into a 50-bed FRU Urban Community Health Centre (UCHC) compliant with Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS).

In addition, a dedicated day-care centre, Vatsalya Mane, will be launched at Pobbatti Hospital for the rehabilitation and development of specially abled children. The corporation has also proposed shelter homes and protection centres for economically disadvantaged groups, alongside budgetary provisions for mental health services and advanced treatment through primary health centres. Under the Arogya Mitra initiative, ₹19 crore has been earmarked for setting up Smart Virtual Clinics across 22 locations.

Market infrastructure is another area of focus, with ₹90 crore allocated for redevelopment. Of this, ₹70 crore has been set aside for the redevelopment of Russell Market, while ₹20 crore will be used to upgrade other three markets, including K.R. Market, Johnson Market, and Kalasipalya Market. The corporation currently manages 112 markets with 4,772 shops and expects to generate ₹25 crore in rental income.

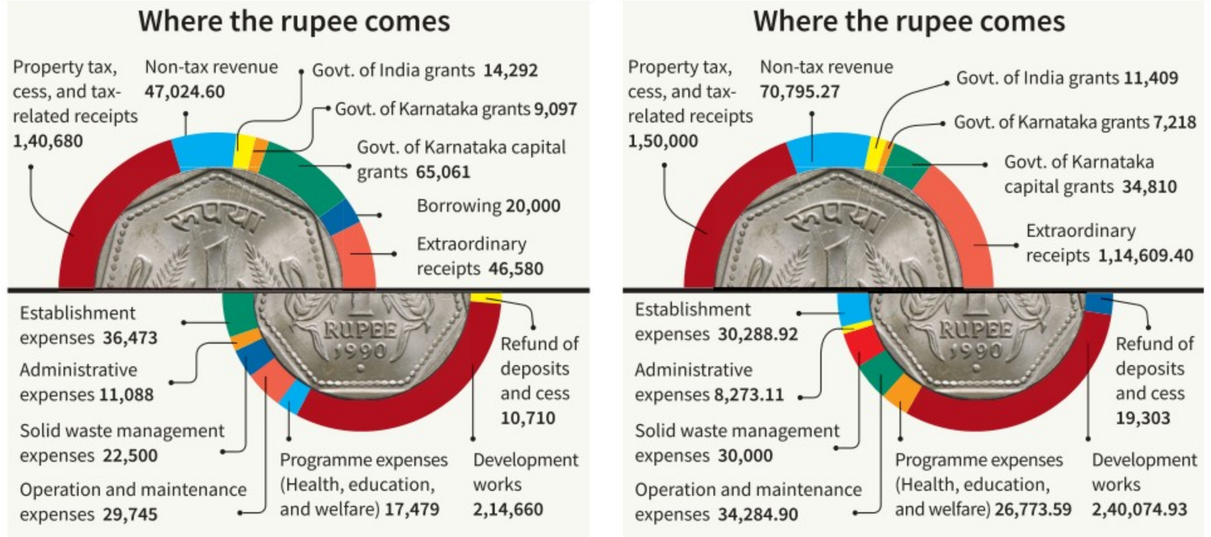
The corporation, has also proposed a pilot project titled 'Kirumalige - Shuddha Aahaara' with a budget of ₹25 lakh. The scheme will focus on training street vendors under FSSAI guidelines and developing designated hygienic food zones in each ward.

However, activist Vinay Sreenivasa, involved with urban poor, pourakarmikas and street vendors, said that the budget lacks a systemic approach to addressing issues such as housing and livelihoods. "For example, street vendor unions have been demanding budgetary allocations for Town Vending Committees and basic facilities in markets, but the budget instead proposes providing e-carts. There is also no mention of slum development or land rights for slum dwellers," he said.

The corporation announced the introduction of artificial intelligence (AI) training in its schools, alongside a 'Cyber Kavacha' awareness campaign that will conduct ward-level workshops to protect citizens from cyber fraud and online scams.

A hybrid pilot programme focusing on physical education, yoga, and mental wellness will be rolled out.

Mr. Sreenivasa said there was a strong emphasis on public-private partnerships (PPPs), owing to low revenues of the corporations, which he said was affected by the limited flow of grants from the Centre.


Central corporation
Where the rupee comes
Property tax, cess, and tax-related receipts 1,40,680
Non-tax revenue 47,024.60
Govt. of India grants 14,292
Govt. of Karnataka grants 9,097
Govt. of Karnataka capital grants 65,061
Borrowing 20,000
Extraordinary receipts 46,580
Establishment expenses 36,473
Administrative expenses 11,088
Solid waste management expenses 22,500
Operation and maintenance expenses 29,745
Programme expenses (Health, education, and welfare) 17,479
Refund of deposits and cess 10,710
Development works 2,14,660
Where the rupee goes

Budget highlights

- Introduction of **bike ambulance** during golden hour
- Redevelopment of four city markets at **₹90 crore**
- **New scheme** Corporation to construct free, residential complexes, **Hiriyara Vadi (Elders' Abode)**, for senior citizens with NGOs and CSR funding.
- New veterinary hospitals to provide **free treatment** to community dogs and pets belonging to underprivileged families
- For sanitation workers, **Mustering Centres**, and **Suvidha Centres** in every ward

East corporation presents maiden budget with outlay of ₹3,889.98 crore

62% of the total outlay has been allocated for development works; 58 flood-prone areas have been identified, of which steps have been taken on 38, and funds allocated for remaining locations

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

Bengaluru East City Corporation Commissioner D. S. Ramesh presented the corporation's first annual budget with a total outlay of ₹3,889.98 crore, prioritising connectivity, infrastructure, and public health.

The budget pegs income at ₹3,888.41 crore, while the opening balance of the city corporation was estimated at ₹1.58 crore, indicating that Mr. Ramesh presented a ₹1.56 lakh surplus budget. Further, the corporation will raise ₹200 crore through municipal bonds, which will make it eligible for a ₹26 crore incentive from the Union government.

D.S. Ramesh, Commissioner, Bengaluru East City Corporation, presenting the corporation's maiden budget on Friday.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

A significant 62% of the total outlay has been allocated for development works, as Mr. Ramesh emphasised that last-mile connectivity has been prioritised and will be ensured through an integrated multimodal transport system for seamless mobility. Further, an allocation of ₹112.5 crore has been made for the overall development and maintenance of roads and drains within the corporation's jurisdiction.

Development projects

Barring two projects that will be taken up through municipal bonds, the corporation has not announced any new development works, instead focusing on the proper upgrading of existing infrastructure.

KRDCL is already constructing a flyover from Varthur Kodi to Varthur Police Station. The corporation will extend this further to Gunjur, covering a stretch of 2 km, at a cost of ₹150 crore. Further, to ease congestion on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) by addressing a bottleneck, the corporation has proposed the construction of an underpass on Alpine Eco Road. Mr. Ramesh also mentioned plans to build footpaths along the Namma Metro viaduct in collaboration with the Outer Ring Road Companies' Association (ORRCA), as announced in the state budget recently. The corporation will also undertake road development in areas around the ORR, primarily to enhance last-mile connectivity.

The corporation has identified 58 flood-prone areas, of which 38 have already been addressed, and funds have been allocated in this budget to mitigate flooding in the remaining locations. Further, ₹20 crore has been earmarked for the comprehensive development of key public spaces and the preparation of a climate action plan. ₹28 crore has been allocated for the maintenance of 45 lakes within its jurisdiction, while ₹25 crore has been earmarked for the development of four lakes. In addition, 19 stormwater drain works have already been taken up, and funds have been allocated to these projects.

Reacting to the budget, representatives of Whitefield Rising said, "The most important takeaway is the proposed public digital dashboard. It will make all the difference. Many of the projects announced are carryovers that have been promised before but not seen on the ground, and this is where real-time transparency and tracking can drive accountability. The budget itself is strong, with meaningful investments in core infrastructure, public spaces, healthcare, and social welfare, along with a clear push to build administrative capacity". However, key gaps remain: there is no allocation for public toilets, solid waste infrastructure, parking, road markings and signage, or designated street vending zones. Empowering vendors requires proper vending zones, not just e-carts. they added.

East corporation
Where the rupee comes
Property tax, cess, and tax-related receipts 1,50,000
Non-tax revenue 70,795.27
Govt. of India grants 11,409
Govt. of Karnataka grants 7,218
Govt. of Karnataka capital grants 34,810
Extraordinary receipts 1,14,609.40
Establishment expenses 30,288.92
Administrative expenses 8,273.11
Solid waste management expenses 30,000
Operation and maintenance expenses 34,284.90
Programme expenses (Health, education, and welfare) 26,773.59
Refund of deposits and cess 19,303
Development works 2,40,074.93
Where the rupee goes

Budget highlights

- Formation of a **4.5 km** road from **Outer Ring Road to Satya Sai Metro Station**
- Construction of a grade separator at an estimated cost of **₹50 crore** on **Alpine Eco Road** of ORR
- Construction of **2 km** Elevated Corridor from Varthur towards Gunjur at a **cost of ₹150 crore**
- Two veterinary clinics will be established at a cost of **₹2 crore**
- Footpath of **9 km** along the metro viaduct on ORR at an estimated cost of **₹160 crore**. ORRCA to fund the project

Central corporation imposes 2% tax on Khatas in a bid to boost revenue, widen property tax base

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 2% tax on stamp duty for issuing new Khatas has been announced in the Bengaluru Central City Corporation's budget as part of corporation's push to increase revenue and widen the property tax base. This is the only new tax added on Friday.

Stamp duty is around 6% of the guidance value of the property. For instance, for a ₹60 lakh property, stamp duty will be ₹3.6 lakh. The new Khata rule proposes a 2% charge on this stamp duty amount, which works out to ₹7,200, explained property consultant K. R. Ramesh. However, he said there is no clarity whether Khata transfers and division from a builder to a flat buyer will incur this new tax or not.

Both the east and central corporations intend to increase their property tax revenue by identifying tax evaders and ensuring defaulters pay using technology.

The east corporations intends to use artificial intelligence (AI) to identify property tax defaulters and expand the tax base through data integration, with a target of generating an additional ₹100 crore annually. A campaign to convert B-Khata properties to A-Khata, under way from November 2025, is expected to generate ₹225 crore annually.

The central corporation has proposed identifying cases where property tax has been incorrectly declared under the self-assessment system and revising the system, while initiating recovery proceedings against properties with dues pending for over a year. Properties will be sealed and auctioned in cases of continued non-payment.

New parking policy

To further boost the revenue, the corporation plans to introduce a new parking policy, streamline outdoor advertising, and commercially utilise its properties through private-public partnerships.

Corporations channel FAR, ad revenue to B-SMILE for its projects

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The central and east corporations will transfer revenue from Premium Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and advertisements to Bengaluru - Smart Infrastructure Ltd. (B-SMILE) for its projects, which include tunnel road, elevated corridors, and Sancharayukta. While the east corporation has committed to transferring full revenue from the two streams, the central corporation has agreed to transfer only 50% of these revenues.

In the budget estimates, the east city corporation has estimated ₹120 crore from advertisement revenue and ₹600 crore from premium FAR revenue, all of which it has committed to transfer to B-SMILE. However, the central corporation is transferring only 50% of its advertisement revenue, amounting to ₹71.25 crore, and 50% of its premium FAR revenue, amounting to ₹175 crore, to B-SMILE.

Although neither corporation has specified the works for which the revenue is being transferred, the payment has been labelled as "Contribution to B-SMILE".

This development comes at a time when the newly formed corporations are attempting to improve and expand their revenue sources, as the restructuring of the civic body has led to a division of revenue streams.

Major share of budget allocated for road infra improvement

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In their maiden budgets, both Bengaluru City East and Central Corporations allocated major chunks—62% and 63%, respectively, of their total outlay—for development works, of which improving road infrastructure and addressing connectivity woes have gained central focus. After failing to take off for many years, both Corporations intend to revive road widening projects again this year. Both Corporations have set aside funds for land acquisition to ensure these projects take off.

Both corporations are raising ₹200 crore each through municipal bonds, which will be used exclusively for road development. While the Central Corporation has not specified the exact works to be undertaken using these funds, the East Corporation plans to build a flyover from Varthur towards Gunjur and a grade separator on Alpine Eco Road.

A senior officer from the east corporation explained that their jurisdiction includes one of the busiest roads in the city, the Outer Ring Road, but the connecting roads require major upgrades, an issue also flagged by citizen groups in East Bengaluru.

The central corporation faces similar challenges, particularly congestion and a substantial increase in the number of vehicles in its jurisdiction, eventually leading to poor road conditions. Compounding the issue is the unavailability of land to construct new roads. However, the corporation has identified scope for widening existing roads and improving their quality.

Among the major roads to be widened in the east corporation are Bileshivalaya Main Road (3.8 km), Bellathuru Main Road to Medehalli Main Road (7 km), Nallurahalli Main Road (8.5 km), and Whitefield Main Road (5.5 km). In the central corporation, Padarayanapura Main Road in the Chamarajapete area will be widened from 9 m to 24 m.

The east corporation has allocated ₹50 crore for the development of ward roads.

The central corporation has allocated ₹217.50 crore for the development of arterial and sub-arterial roads.

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How did I become a coach and Carlsen's second? I got too weak as a player

Coaching and assisting top-class players, co-founding a popular website, voicing the soundtrack for some of the sport's major matches: Jan Gustafsson has lived in many corners of the chess world. In addition to discussing his various experiences in the game, he also talks in this chat about the Candidates, which begins on Sunday, and the rise of German chess

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I enjoy the chess world and going to tournaments, but I never enjoyed playing that much, so being a commentator is a great way to stay in touch
JAN GUSTAFSSON

INTERVIEW

Jan Gustafsson

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Jan Gustafsson was once ranked 85th in the world, but he has always been keen to view chess not just as a professional player. He became a coach when he was 21, he is an expert in opening theory and a widely regarded commentator, and he worked as Magnus Carlsen's second for three successive World Championship matches. Excerpts from an interview Gustafsson gave *The Hindu* in Goa:

The Candidates features a German for the first time since 1991.

We in Germany are rooting for Matthias Bluebaum though he is not one of the big favourites. It will be a close tournament. The Candidates is such a nervy affair, a long tournament. I think whoever qualifies, they will already have shown their worth in the Candidates and it will be a tough match for D. Gukesh. But Gukesh has gained experience, and you can see his preparation is so much better.

German chess seems to be in good shape. Vincent Keymer, who was Gukesh's second for his World title match against Ding Liren, is the World No. 4. And you also have men like Alexander Donchenko and Frederik Svane.

We have had this group for a couple of years. We won the European Team Championship [tied for first place with Serbia before finishing runner-up on tie-breaks in 2023], but didn't manage to win this time around. But, yeah, the young guys are getting even stronger. So we have a good group, but it's about making the next step. They have had some special support, so it's good to see it's showing fruit.

How big is the emergence of Keymer as a potential World champion for German chess?

There are so many young guys who have potential to be the World champion, like Nodirbek Abdusattorov, Alireza Firouzja, R. Praggnanandhaa, and there are players like Javokhir Sindarov; and Andrey Esipenko is coming up. And I am sure I am forgetting five names. There are a lot of top players around in that 19 to 22 age group. And Arjun Erigaisi, too. But we are happy Vincent is in that group. And it is nice to be able to root for someone.

You were one of the founders of *chess24.com*, which was an excellent site to follow chess, with its easy navigation, attractive layout, the way the content was presented or how live games were streamed. But as has happened often in the past, the portal was bought by a bigger company and then killed.

> Magnus is impressive in every aspect of the game. And he is a fun guy, too

Yeah, it is a bit sad. But I think there is still so much great chess content out there now. The world is changing a bit, so there is no shortage. Yes, I think we did a great job at chess24.

So why did you have to sell it?

I wasn't involved in the business side of it.

What took you to chess24?

I knew some people. And it started as a project a long, long time ago. It was a fun ride. I find plenty of work and stuff to do in the chess world, but yeah, I miss some of the features of chess24.

You were very young when you became a coach. You also worked as a second to the world's strongest player of all time, Magnus Carlsen. How did this happen?

I got too weak as a player. And I like being in the chess world, so I look for other work. I was a coach when I was 21. I was a coach at the World Junior Championships. In chess, it is normal that you have different roles.

It certainly is. How did the role with Carlsen in multiple World title matches come about?

I am not sure. Because of connections perhaps and the fact that I like chess openings. It was an exciting opportunity to work at some World Championship matches.

You worked with him for the first time for the 2016 match against Sergey Karjakin.

Yes, my work was more on the opening lines.

Were there any lines Carlsen wanted to work on in particular?

I was a bit of a specialist in the Marshall Attack after 'e4 e5', so we worked on that.

How did you find working with Carlsen?

I was mainly a workhorse somewhere far away. Of course, we spent some time, but I wasn't so much in touch with Magnus physically. But everything was always great. And for a player like me, it is an honour to be involved with World Championship matches, the biggest stage in chess.

How big was Carlsen's team in 2016?

Normally it is like three or four guys somewhere remote, and then the main second on site. That 2016 match was tough. He was behind in the match and he was a big favourite. So it wasn't exactly a smooth ride. But he did come through in the end.

You worked with Carlsen again in 2018 for his World title match against Fabiano Caruana. It was a close affair, too.

Caruana was very strong then. Ratings were close and it was a very nervy match with all those draws [in the classical games]. We knew in the tiebreak, Magnus was probably going to be a big favourite, and he came through there, but it was very tough.

And you worked with him again in the 2021 World title match against Ian Nepomniachtchi.

That one went well. In the first six games, Nepo was very well prepared and it was a very tense fight. But after Magnus won the first game, it was sort of smooth sailing. I have enjoyed working with Magnus. He is impressive in every aspect of the game. And he is a fun guy, too.

How do you find being a commentator?

I enjoy it. It varies day by day. I enjoy the chess world and going to tournaments, but I never enjoyed playing that much, so being a commentator for me is a great way to sort of stay in touch with chess.

And chess commentators are getting popular in places like India. Your colleague Peter Leko was talking of how shocked he was when he was recognised by a couple of Indians by just his voice in Goa.

Peter Leko is amazing. I can imagine him being popular enough to be recognised.

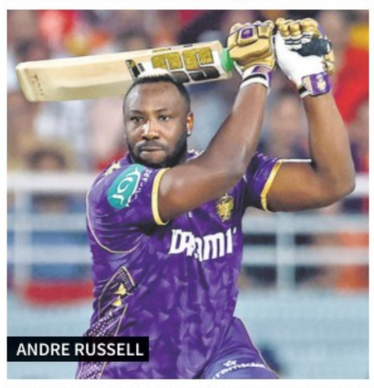
What made you turn to commentary?

In chess, if you're not a world-class player, there are many different roles, and I like talking, so commentary was a natural fit.

GAME THEORY

Top per-ball performers in IPL history

With the 19th season of the Indian Premier League getting underway, we look at the batters who have scored the most runs per ball and the bowlers who have conceded the fewest runs per ball in the tournament's history



FASTEST-SCORING BATTERS

Batter	Runs scored per ball
Phil Salt	1.76
Andre Russell	1.74
Travis Head	1.70
Heinrich Klaasen	1.70
Nicholas Pooran	1.69
Sunil Narine	1.67
Abhishek Sharma	1.63
Liam Livingstone	1.59
Jitesh Sharma	1.57
Virender Sehwag	1.55
Glenn Maxwell	1.55
Rajat Patidar	1.54
Yashasvi Jaiswal	1.53
Prabhsimran Singh	1.52
Shimron Hetmyer	1.52
AB de Villiers	1.52
Jos Buttler	1.49
Chris Gayle	1.49
Suryakumar Yadav	1.49
Rishabh Pant	1.48

MOST ECONOMICAL BOWLERS

Bowler	Runs conceded per ball
Anil Kumble	1.10
Glenn McGrath	1.10
Muthiah Muralidaran	1.11
Roelof van der Merwe	1.12
Daniel Vettori	1.13
Sunil Narine	1.13
Jayant Yadav	1.14
Dale Steyn	1.15
Johan Botha	1.15
Dimitri Mascarenhas	1.16
Rahul Sharma	1.17
Harbhajan Singh	1.18
Rashid Khan	1.18
Lasith Malinga	1.19
R. Ashwin	1.20
Doug Bollinger	1.20
Moeen Ali	1.20
Iqbal Abdulla	1.21

SOURCE: ESPNCRICINFO.COM | MIN. 500 BALLS FACED FOR BATTERS AND 300 BALLS BOWLED FOR BOWLERS

PICTURE THIS

GETTY IMAGES

Scenic route

Belgium's Thierry Neuville and Martijn Wydaeghe (co-driver) plot a path through the East African terrain in Naivasha, Kenya, during the third round of the FIA World Rally Championship earlier this month.

The World Rally Championship — the second-oldest of the FIA's world championships after Formula One — pits drivers against incredibly challenging conditions, including surfaces ranging from gravel and tarmac to snow and ice.

The Safari Rally Kenya, for instance, consisted of 20 special stages (350.52 km) on gravel.

Every season spans a calendar year, with titles awarded to drivers, co-drivers and manufacturers. The 2026 season, the competition's 54th edition, comprises 14 rounds across Europe, Africa, South America and Asia.

This year's championship began in January with the Monte Carlo Rally and is set to conclude in November with the Rally Saudi Arabia.

The season features mandatory rest periods — a minimum of 10 hours per day — following criticism of rally itineraries, with many participants feeling past schedules posed a safety risk for the crews.

SATURDAY
March 28, 2026

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Noida International Airport

Navnirman Ke

Uttar Pradesh
Taking Off to New Heights

A Future-ready Greenfield Airport,
developed at a cost of ₹11,200 Crore, accelerating connectivity and growth

Grand Inauguration of
Noida International Airport (Phase I)

by

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Uttar Pradesh Powering India's Aviation Future

- Among India's largest greenfield airport projects
- Multi-Modal Transport Hub with seamless integration across road, rail, metro and regional transit systems
- Multi-Modal Cargo Hub with an annual capacity of 2.5 lakh+ metric tonnes, expandable to around 18 lakh metric tonnes
- Envisioned as a major international gateway for the NCR region
- Passenger handling capacity of 1.20 crore annually
- Expansion of passenger handling capacity up to 7 crore annually by Phase 4
- Architecturally inspired by the rich cultural heritage of Uttar Pradesh, featuring haveli-style design elements and a multi-level terminal blending the divinity of the ghats of Varanasi and Haridwar
- Interiors enhanced with handicrafts and textiles from states across India

In the august presence of

Anandiben Patel
Governor, Uttar Pradesh

Yogi Adityanath
Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu
Minister, Civil Aviation, Government of India

Pankaj Chaudhary
Minister of State, Finance, Government of India

Keshav Prasad Maurya
Deputy Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

Brajesh Pathak
Deputy Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

Brajesh Singh
Minister of State, Public Works Department, Uttar Pradesh

Dr. Mahesh Sharma
MP, Gautam Buddha Nagar

Surendra Singh Nagar
Member, Rajya Sabha

Amit Chaudhary
Chairman, District Panchayat, Gautam Buddha Nagar

Pankaj Singh
MLA, Noida

Tejpal Singh Nagar
MLA, Dadri

Dhirendra Singh
MLA, Jewar

Sanjay Kumar Sharma
MLA, Anupshahr

Surender Diler
MLA, Khair

Lakshmi Raj Singh
MLA, Sikandrabad

Shrikant Sharma
MLA, Mathura

Minakshi Singh
MLA, Khurja

Rajesh Chaudhary
MLA, Mant

Jaiveer Singh
MLA, Barauli

Narendra Singh Bhati
MLC

Shrichand Sharma
MLC

and other dignitaries

Date: 28th March, 2026 | Time: 11:30 AM | Venue: Jewar, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh

Vikas ki Gati Apaar-Double Engine Sarkar

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Nav Nirman Ke 9 Varsh | Infrastructure & Connectivity Transformation

TRANSFORMING UTTAR PRADESH

From Limited Resources to a $1 Trillion Economy

Over the past nine years, Uttar Pradesh has undergone a historic transformation in infrastructure, evolving from limited connectivity in 2017 to becoming one of India's fastest-growing logistics and industrial hubs.

The expansion of expressways, airports, waterways, and industrial corridors has accelerated development, reduced logistics costs and unlocked new opportunities in investment, exports and employment.

This robust infrastructure foundation is positioning Uttar Pradesh as a key driver of India's economic growth and its journey towards a $1 trillion economy.

Expressways | Airports | Waterways | Industrial Corridors

From Just 2 expressways in 2017 to 22 today, along with airports, waterways and Industrial corridor,
Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the nation's logistics and industrial hub, paving the way to a $1 trillion economy

Expressway Network: Backbone of High-Speed Growth

From just 2 expressways in 2017 to 22 today

Enabling faster freight movement, reduced travel time and seamless inter-city connectivity.

- 2017: 2 expressways
- Today: 22 expressways
- 7 operational
- 5 under construction
- 10 proposed

55% of India's expressway network now passes through Uttar Pradesh

Industrial & Logistics Ecosystem

From Connectivity to Industrial Powerhouse

Creation of large industrial land banks and integrated manufacturing clusters is accelerating investment and job creation across the state.

- 5,300 hectares identified for industrial development
- Bundelkhand Industrial Development Authority (BIDA) formed
- 56,662 acres under development
- Integrated Manufacturing Clusters in Prayagraj & Agra
- Junction of Eastern & Western Dedicated Freight Corridors at Dadri

Road & Rural Connectivity

Last-Mile Connectivity Driving Inclusive Growth

- 35,433 km rural roads constructed
- 27,951 km roads widened/strengthened
- 5,604 km upgraded to higher category
- 70 new state highways declared

Bridges & Road Over Bridges (ROBs): 294 bridges completed

■ 116 under construction ■ 141 ROBs (Road Over Bridges) & 16 flyovers completed

Expanding rural road networks is improving last-mile connectivity, enhancing access to markets, healthcare, and education for millions.

Aviation Expansion & Jewar MRO Hub

Connecting Uttar Pradesh to the World

Passenger traffic has surged from 59.97 lakhs (2016-17) to 1423 lakhs (2024-25), reflecting exponential growth in air connectivity.

Connecting Uttar Pradesh to the World

- 16 operational airports (4 international)
- 8 airports under development
- Jewar Airport will make Uttar Pradesh the only state with 5 international airports.
- Air connectivity to 80+ destinations
- Passenger growth:

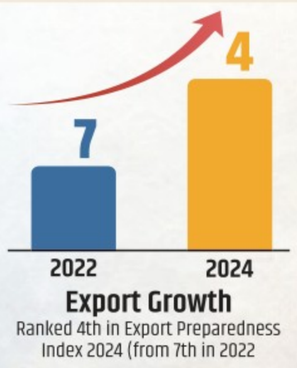
Jewar Airport: A Strategic Aviation Hub

- Developed as an aviation innovation and research centre
- Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) hub
- Aviation-based industrial clusters along expressways

Rising Exports, Stronger Global Competitiveness

Lower Costs, Higher Competitiveness

- Ranked 4th in Export Preparedness Index 2024
- Ranked 1st among landlocked states 2024
- Reduced logistics cost
- Increased investor confidence
- Faster transportation & improved supply chains



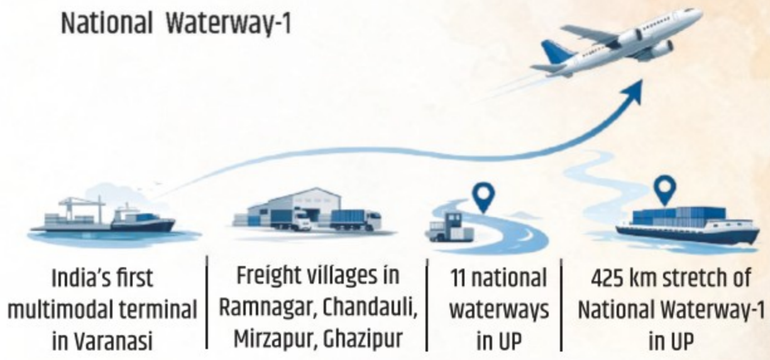
Export Growth
Ranked 4th in Export Preparedness Index 2024 (from 7th in 2022

Multi-modal Connectivity

Seamless Connectivity Across Land, Air & Water

Strengthening seamless movement of goods across road, air and water, reducing logistics costs and improving supply chain efficiency.

- India's first multimodal terminal in Varanasi
- Freight villages in Ramnagar, Chandauli, Mirzapur, Ghazipur
- 11 national waterways in Uttar Pradesh 425 km stretch of National Waterway-1



India's first multimodal terminal in Varanasi | Freight villages in Ramnagar, Chandauli, Mirzapur, Ghazipur | 11 national waterways in UP | 425 km stretch of National Waterway-1 in UP

Policy & Future Vision

Building the Foundation for a $1 Trillion Economy

Strategic policy initiatives are aligning infrastructure, logistics and industrial growth, creating a robust ecosystem for investors and businesses.

PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan implementation

Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission boosting development

Expressways + Industrial Corridors + Logistics Integration

Export-oriented policies & investor-friendly ecosystem

Building Infrastructure Today. Powering Growth for Tomorrow

With world-class infrastructure, seamless connectivity, and strong policy support, Uttar Pradesh is rapidly emerging as a preferred investment destination.
The state is not only enhancing industrial competitiveness but also generating large-scale employment and driving inclusive growth

Uttar Pradesh: Driving India's Growth Through Infrastructure Excellence

J BG-BGE

Lokayukta flags ICU lapses, private ambulance nexus at Victoria Hospital

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Lokayukta has asked the State to consider regulating private ambulance services through a prepaid system.

Six ICU beds lying unused due to non-functional ventilators, the presence of expired medicines in the critical care unit, and the alleged role of private ambulance operators and middlemen in diverting patients have been flagged by the Karnataka Lokayukta following a probe into functioning at Victoria Hospital.

The findings emerged from a surprise inspection ordered during a *suo motu* proceeding initiated on complaints of patient exploitation within the hospital premises. The inspection report noted that despite six ICU beds being available in the Trauma and Emergency Care Centre (TECC) in Victoria Hospital, an emergency patient was denied admission on the grounds of non-availability, with authorities later attributing it to non-working ventilators.

The probe also found expired medicines in the ICU and pointed to the unchecked presence of private ambulance drivers and middlemen, who were allegedly persuading patients to shift to private hospitals by claiming a lack of facilities at Victoria Hospital. There were also allegations that some hospital staff directed patient attenders to opt for private ambulance services.

Earlier, notices had been issued to officials of the Medical Education Department and institutions, including Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI), seeking explanations and corrective measures.

During a hearing on February 6, TECC Special Officer Asima Banu stated that the situation involving middlemen had become "uncontrollable", citing bed shortages and instances of threats to doctors and staff.

Taking note of the situation, the Lokayukta had constituted an inquiry committee headed by a sitting District Judge, along with police officials, to conduct a surprise inspection and report on alleged maladministration.

The Deputy Commissioner of Police, Bengaluru South, informed the authority that no formal complaints had been registered against specific ambulance operators, but directed the hospital to strengthen monitoring and curb unauthorised activities within the hospital campus.

The Lokayukta has also called upon the State government to consider regulating private ambulance services, including the introduction of a prepaid system.

Taking serious note of the lapses, the authority has directed that the inspection report be shared with senior officials, including the Chief Secretary and the Medical Education Department. A compliance report has been sought by April 23, and the matter will be taken up again on April 27, according to an official press release.

NHAI hikes toll by 1–3% across State highways

The toll will be revised at 58 of the 69 toll plazas across the State starting from April 1

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

The revised toll, effective April 1, shows that while passenger vehicles remain largely unaffected, light commercial and heavy vehicles will bear a slight increase ranging between ₹5 and ₹25. FILE PHOTO

Toll charges across key Karnataka highways will see a marginal revision of around 1-3%, with no increase for cars on major corridors, including the Bengaluru airport stretch, offering partial relief to daily commuters.

According to price hike details from NHAI accessed by *The Hindu*, the revised toll rates effective April 1, 2026, show that while passenger vehicles remain largely unaffected, light commercial and heavy vehicles will bear a slight increase ranging between ₹5 and ₹25, translating to roughly 2-3% across most plazas.

According to the comparison sheet by the NHAI for 2026-27, car/jeep/van (LMV) users remain largely unaffected, with toll charges unchanged at ₹120 at the Airport Toll Plaza, while Kaniminike and Gananguru, the two main toll plazas on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Access-Controlled Highway, will have an increase of ₹5 in the toll for car, jeep, van and LMV.

Airport Toll Plaza

However, the commercial and heavy vehicle segments have witnessed slight increases.

At the Airport Toll Plaza, Light Commercial Vehicles (LCVs) have seen a rise from ₹185 to ₹190, marking an increase of about 2.7%, while trucks and buses have gone up from ₹370 to ₹375 (1.35% increase). Multi-axle vehicles have seen a slightly higher jump of nearly 2.7%.

At Kaniminike and Gananguru toll plazas hikes are slightly higher in absolute terms but still remain within the 2%-3% range across categories. Meanwhile, at the Bagepalli Toll Plaza in Chikkaballapur, toll rates remain largely unchanged across all vehicle categories.

In contrast, the Gadduru Toll Plaza in Kolar has seen a marginal upward revision, with select categories such as two-axle trucks and multi-axle vehicles witnessing a ₹5 increase, translating to roughly 2-4% growth.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, a senior NHAI official said that the toll rates will be revised at 58 of the 69 toll plazas across the State. "The updated toll rates, linked to changes in the Wholesale Price Index (WPI), are expected to be notified shortly. While the hike will cover most toll plazas, around 11 are likely to implement the revised rates from September 1. The adjustment is based on WPI movements to factor in inflation and the increasing cost of maintaining national highways."

At Kaniminike and Gananguru toll plazas hikes are slightly higher in absolute terms

Kaniminike Toll Plaza

Category	Existing fare (in ₹)	Revised fare w.e.f. 01.04.2026 (in ₹)
Car/Jeep/Van/LMV	175	180
LCV/LGV/Mini-bus	280	285
Truck/Bus (2 axles)	585	600
3 Axle commercial vehicle	640	655
Heavy Construction machinery/MAV (4–6 axles)	920	940
Oversized vehicles (7 or more axles)	1,120	1,145

Gananguru Toll Plaza

Category	Existing fare (in ₹)	Revised fare w.e.f. 01.04.2026 (in ₹)
Car/Jeep/Van/LMV	170	175
LCV/LGV/Mini-bus	275	280
Truck/Bus (2 axles)	570	585
3 Axle commercial vehicle	625	640
Heavy construction machinery / MAV (4–6 axles)	900	920
Oversized vehicles (7 or more axles)	1,095	1,120

Airport Toll Plaza

Category	Existing fare (in ₹)	Revised fare w.e.f. 01.04.2026 (in ₹)
Car/Jeep/Van/LMV	120	120
LCV/LGV/Mini-bus	185	190
Truck/Bus	370	375
Heavy construction machinery / MAV (3–6 axles)	560	575
Oversized vehicles (7 or more axles)	725	745

Source: NHAI

Lorry crashes into car, sets off blaze; one dead

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A late-night accident involving a steel-laden lorry and a CNG-powered car led to a massive fire near Kurubarahalli around 1.30 a.m. on Friday, triggering panic in the area and resulting in the death of one person.

According to preliminary information, the driver of the lorry lost control of the vehicle on a steep downward slope and rammed into a stationary car. The impact pushed the car into a nearby scrap godown, sparking a fire that quickly engulfed both vehicles and the scrap material.

Fire and emergency services rushed to the spot and battled the flames using multiple fire tenders. It took several hours to bring the blaze under control.

A cab driver was trapped inside the car and lost his life. The victim, Ambadas, 23, was a native of Kalaburagi. He was reportedly waiting to pick up a passenger and had fallen asleep at the time of the accident. Firefighters faced difficulty in retrieving the charred body from the wreckage.

The lorry driver, identified as Sharma, sustained minor injuries and has been admitted to a hospital.

The police said the lorry dragged the car for nearly 100 metres before crashing into the scrap yard, triggering the fire.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

(CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION)

E-TENDER NOTICE No. 45-CECNMS-2026-E-626893 Dated: 18.03.2026
E-TENDER NOTICE No. CAO-CN-MS-DDC-01-2026 Dated: 23.03.2026
E-TENDER NOTICE No. CAO-CN-MS-EPC-NL-01-2026 Dated: 23.03.2026

For and on behalf of The President of India, The Chief Engineer, Construction, Southern Railway, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008 invites e-tender for the following work(s) as per Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) in our portal **www.ireps.gov.in** The Tenderers / Contractors intending to apply for the tender needs to get enrolled in the portal **www.ireps.gov.in** and only online tenders will be accepted.

NAME OF THE WORK

VM-KPD Section - Proposed Construction of ROB 1 x 33.970 m (SQ) 34.880 (SK) in lieu of LC 128 at Km. 151/12-13 between Vellore and Katpadi Stations.

Cash Value (₹)	Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Period of Completion in (Months)	Closing Date @ 15.30 hrs.
78869136.50	544400.00	12 Months	09-04-2026

NAME OF THE WORK

Request For Proposal for PROVIDING SERVICES RELATED TO STRUCTURAL DESIGN AND PROOF CHECKING FOR NEW LINE, DOUBLING, GAUGE CONVERSION, 3RD AND 4TH LINE PROJECTS, ROAD OVER BRIDGES AND ROAD UNDER BRIDGES etc., INCLUDING STATION BUILDINGS, FOBs, PF SHELTERS AND OTHER ANCILLARY STRUCTURES At Projects of Construction Organization under Chief Administrative Officer/CN/MS, Southern Railway, Tamil Nadu.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL for the "Construction of 3rd and 4th New Railway BG line between Attipatu and Gummudipundi for Civil Engineering, Signalling & Telecommunication, Electrical General & OHE Electrification works including utility shifting" on EPC MODE

Cash Value (₹ in Crores)	Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Period of Completion in (Months)	Closing Date @ 15.30 hrs.	Pre-Bid Conference Date and Time
9.95	647600.00	36	12-05-2026	13-04-2026 @ 11.30 hrs
285.68	10000000.00	24	12-05-2026	13-04-2026 @ 12.30 hrs

For further details, please refer to website portal **www.ireps.gov.in** or contact Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Construction, E.V.R. High Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008.

Chief Engineer (Construction), Egmore, Chennai - 600 008

Four drown in Tungabhadra

YADGIR: Four people, including two women, from Manvi taluk in Raichur district died in the Tungabhadra near Kandkur village, Kosigi Mandal, in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh on Friday.

The deceased have been identified as 35-year-old Dasari Umavathi, 29-year-old Dasari Ratnamma, 20-year-old Dasari Shivanand and 28-year-old Mahantesh.

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tender on behalf of the president of India acting through Chief Project Manager, Gati Shakti Unit, West Central Railway, Jabalpur for the following works:- **NIT No.:** CPM/GSU-JBP/02-2026 Dated 24.03.2026, **Name of work with location:** 03 ROB works on Itarsi-Jabalpur section of Jabalpur Division of West Central Railway (1) Construction of Road Over Bridge at LC No. 231 at Km 790/33-35 on JBP-ET section (Span 1×30M+ 1×24M) Composite Girder (2) Construction of Road Over Bridge at LC No. 234 at Km 805/10-12 on JBP-ET section (Span 2×36M) Composite Girder (3) Construction of Road Over Bridge at LC No. 239 at Km 823/5-7 on JBP-ET section (Span 1×30M+1×18M) Composite Girder, **Approx Cost of the work:** ₹34,64,10,410.36, **Earnest Money (Rs.):** ₹69,28,300/-, **Completion period:** 24 Months, **Last Date & Time for submission of tender (Upto 15:00 Hrs. On):** 20.04.2026, **Tender to be opened at 15:15 Hrs. On):** 20.04.2026. **Note:** The complete information of the above 'e-tender' is available on website **"https://ireps.gov.in"** and also placed on notice board of the Chief Project Manager, Gati Shakti Unit, West Central Railway, Jabalpur. Tender other than in the form of e-bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. **(Sd)**

Dy. Chief Engineer Gati Shakti Unit West Central Railway, Jabalpur

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

e-Auction

अजमेर मण्डल के विभिन्न स्टेशनो पर PARKING, SLR LEASING, CATERING, PAY AND USE, OUT OF HOME, MOBILE ASSET, RDN (DIGITAL) ATM, CLOAK ROOM, DIGITAL DISPLAY SYSTEM के ठेके के लिये ई-ऑक्शन / कोटेशन आमंत्रित सूचना :- **Sr No.:** 1, **Assets:** Rail Coach Restaurant, **Particular:** Setting up & Operation of Rail Coach Restaurant inside ZRTI Udaipur Railway Station, **e-Auction Notice Date:** 02.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 2, **Assets:**, Mobile & Laptop Accessories Kiosks, **Particular:** Setting-up, Operation and Maintenance of a Cluster of Four (04) Mobile & Laptop Accessories Kiosks, Ajmer Railway Station., **e-Auction Notice Date:** 03.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 3, **Assets:** Advertisement, **Particular:** Advertisement contract through vinyl wrapping on the exterior surface of the coaches of Train 12065, 19609, 12996, 19605, **e-Auction Notice Date:** 03.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 4, **Assets:** MPS, **Particular:** Multi - Purpose Stall (MPS) at Ajmer, Abu-road and Nasirabad station., **e-Auction Notice Date:** 03.04.2026,**Sr No.:** 5, **Assets:** Premium Store, **Particular:** Setting up, operation & maintenance of "Premium Store" at Bhilwara Railway Station., **e-Auction Notice Date:** 04.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 6, **Assets:**Parking, **Particular:** Parking at Ajmer station mall Godown including Rly staff, **e-Auction Notice Date:** 04.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 7, **Assets:** Mobile & Laptop Accessories Kiosks, **Particular:** Setting-up, Operation and Maintenance of a Cluster of Three (03) Mobile & Laptop Accessories Kiosks at Bhilwara Railway Station, **e-Auction Notice Date:** 06.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 8, **Assets:** Restrooms, **Particular:** Outsourcing of three restrooms available at Pushkar Railway station, **e-Auction Notice Date:** 07.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 9, **Assets:** Parking, **Particular:** Parking Lot for Two Wheelers at location FOB at Railway Station Ajmer, **e-Auction Notice Date:** 08.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 10, **Assets:** Premium Store, **Particular:** setting up, operation & maintenance of "Premium Store" at Falna Railway Station, **e-Auction Notice Date:** 08.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 11, **Assets:** Waiting Room, **Particular:** maintenance and operation of A/C Waiting Hall at Ajmer railway station, **e-Auction Notice Date:** 08.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 12, **Assets:** Dormitory, **Particular:** Upgradation, Operation and Maintenance of Dormitory Space at MAVLI station., **e-Auction Notice Date:** 09.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 13, **Assets:** SMU, **Particular:** Refreshment stall on Platform No. 01, Ajmer end at Abu road station., **e-Auction Notice Date:** 09.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 14, Assets: Multi - Purpose Stall, **Particular:** Multi - Purpose Stall (MPS) at MARWAR JUNCTION and FALNA station., **e-Auction Notice Date:** 09.04.2026, **Sr No.:** 15, **Assets:** Pay & use, **Particular:** Pay n use Toilets at Bhilwara, **e-Auction Notice Date:** 10.04.2026. वेबसाईट जहां से लोट वाईज ई-ऑक्शन प्रारम्भ होने के समय एवं अन्य जानकारी प्राप्त की जा सकती है: www.ireps.gov.in

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CLARIFICATION OF NAME

I, Shanthamurthy S/o Basavarajaiah R/at No.773, Chikkamata Kalamma Temple Street, 17th Ward, Devanahalli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District - 562 110 do hereby solemnly state that, **SHANTHAMURTHY S/o BASAVARAJAIAH** is my correct name. But in my Passport (No. J2990476) my name is mentioned as **BASAVARAJAIAH** and my father's name as **SHANTHAMURTHY.** Vide affidavit dated 26.03.2026 sworn to Notary, I request the concerned authorities to carryout the necessary correction with my name as **SHANTHAMURTHY** and my father's name as **BASAVARAJAIAH.**

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

NOTICE OF INVITING E-TENDER

Sr.DMM, DRM Office, Bikaner, acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tender No. 34265071 Closing date 17.04.2026 at 14.25 hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **Description of Work:**Supply, Installation & Commissioning of IoT Based water level indicator System With e-SIM for Overhead Water Tank & Underslung Water Tank as per RDSO Specification IS/RDSO-CG/0002:2025 with latest rev, **Quantity:** 1039 Nos., **Date and time for submission of tender:** Submission of E-Tender up to 17.04.2026 at 14.25 hrs., **Website Particular:** www.ireps.gov.in

451-PS/26

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client **Sri. D. C. Ravindra Kumar, S/o K P Channakeshavamurthy,** residing at 1863, Pipeline Main Rd, Kumarswamy Layout, 2nd stage, Bangalore 560078, has lost the **Original Possession Certificate bearing No. PR 22/84-85 dated 24-11-1984 issued by BDA for Site No. 1863** described above. A lost report in this regard was lodged with **Karnataka State Police vide Lost Report No. 2126913 /2026 dated 26-03-2026.**

General public who is in possession or who finds the same is requested to return to the same to the undersigned **within one week** from the date of this publication.

P.Mahalinga Bhat and Srividya P.M,
Advocates,
Office Address: No.2386,T F-2, 3rd Floor, Keerthi Kuteeram Apartment, Pipeline Road, K.S. Layout, Bangalore – 78
Mobile - 9341215791

Bangalore/Dated : 27-03-2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby Notified to general public that our Client, **Sri. Chhatararam,** S/o Parakharam, R/of: Savidhar, Sawidar, Jalor, Rajasthan - 343 049 intend to purchase the Schedule property. Any person/s having any sort of right, claim or title over the Schedule property may notify with documentary proof, either to us or to our Clients within **FIFTEEN (15) DAYS** from the date of this Notice, failing which our Clients shall assume that there are no claims, whatsoever and there afterwards shall proceed to purchase the Schedule property.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of Residential Apartment No. 14, super built up area of 950 Sq.Ft., in First Floor in the multistoried building known as "Chandralok Apartments" bearing BBMP Municipal New No. 28/1, (a portion of old No. 169/28 and 170/27), situated at 5th Cross Road, 5th Main, Gandhinagar, Bengaluru, having P.I.D. No.27-11-28/1, e-katha No. 8660730180, having the accommodation of 3 Bedrooms, Living/Dining Hall, Kitchen, Utility, Toilet w/c and Balcony, bounded on: **East by :** Chandralok Apartment No. 12 A, **West by:** Road, **North by :** Corridor, Stair case, Lift and thereafter Chandraloka Apartment No. 11, **South by :** 5th Cross Road.

The undivided share, interest, right, title in the land over the property bearing Municipal New No. 28/1, (a portion of old No. 169/28 and 170/27), is 236.47 Square feet.

M/s. MATHRU ASSOCIATES, Advocates No.3/15-B, 2nd Floor, DBS Gurusiddappa Building, 4th Main, Gandhinagar, Bengaluru-560009. Ph: 9900900166.

NOTICE OF CONFIRMATION OF REDUCTION OF SHARE CAPITAL

Notice is hereby given that the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Bengaluru Bench, by its order dated 20th February 2026, has confirmed the reduction of the share capital of Right Alpha Capital Private Limited under Section 66 of the Companies Act, 2013.

Pursuant to the said order, the issued, subscribed and paid-up equity share capital of the Company stands reduced from Rs. 25,38,25,360/- (Rupees Twenty-Five Crores Thirty-Eight Lakhs Twenty-Five Thousand Three Hundred Sixty only), divided into 2,53,82,536 equity shares of Rs. 10/- each, to Rs. 5,38,25,360/- (Rupees Five Crores Thirty-Eight Lakhs Twenty-Five Thousand Three Hundred Sixty only), divided into 53,82,536 equity shares of Rs. 10/- each, by paying off, cancelling and extinguishing, in aggregate, 2,00,00,000 (Two Crores only) equity shares of Rs. 10/- each.

The certified copy of the order of the Hon'ble Tribunal along with the approved minutes has been filed with the Registrar of Companies, Karnataka, as required under Section 66(5) of the Companies Act, 2013 on 18th March, 2026.

By Order of the Tribunal
For Right Alpha Capital Private Limited
Sd/-
Ashish Singhal
Director
DIN: 07168726

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 26th March, 2026

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar
Bengaluru - 560 009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in

IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-97/2504/2025-26 **Date: 27.03.2026**

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item Rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited for the work mentioned below as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, state of the art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the the following work as per the schedule given below:

Name of the Work : Establishment of Plug & Play Infrastructure for Manufacturing / Assembly of Electricity Vehicle Component, battery pack assembly, charging infrastructure and testing centre at plot no.1B of EV Block, Harohalli 5th Phase Industrial Area, Ramanagara Taluk, Bengaluru South District.

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **15.04.2026** upto **4.00 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/6501/NR/2025-26

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LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA AT BENGALURU
[SUBSTITUTED SERVICE OF NOTICE TO THE RESPONDENT Nos. 1 & 2 BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION VIDE COURT ORDER DATED: 11/03/2026]
CMP No. 473/2023
(VIDEO CONFERENCING / PHYSICAL HEARING)

PETITIONER/s : SMT. PRABHAVATI .M
W/o. Sri. C.R. Lakshminarayan,
Aged about 55 years, Residing at No. 277, 6th Cross, 1st Main, Domlur Layout, Bangalore - 560 071.
Rep. By GPA Holder
Mr. R.L. Mayur Suprathik

Vs.

RESPONDENT/s : M/s. SUNRISE GROUP
Rep. by Partner - Mr. Rajanna .B, and others
RESPONDENT NOS. 1 & 2
1. M/s. SUNRISE GROUP, A Registered Partnership Firm Registered Address: No. 780, Rajbhavan, 9th 'A' Main Indiranagar I Stage, Bangalore - 560 038.
Rep. By Partner Mr. Rajanna .B & Ors.
2. Mr. RAJANNA .B S/o Sri. Varadappa, Aged about 39 years, Residing at No. 25, Bendiganahalli, Mandur Post, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore - 560 049.

Whereas the above named Petitioner has filed a CMP on this Court under Section 11(5) and 11(6) of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996, as in the copy annexed hereunto.

Emergent Notice is hereby given to you to appear in this Court in person or through an Advocate duly instructed or through some one authorized by law to act for you, in this matter **on 17/04/2026 at 10:30 AM** in case you intend to contest the Petition. If you fail to appear, the petition will be dealt with, heard and decided in your absence.

GIVEN under my hand and the seal of the Court, on the 11th day of March 2026.

BY ORDER OF THE COURT
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Harshvardhan Singh Bafila, Father of Yaksh Singh Bafila, residing at 73, AR Lakeview, Nanjapura Village, near Nanjapura Lake, Jigani, Bangalore-560105, have Changed my Minor Son's Name to Vihaan Singh Bafila through affidavit dated 01/02/2025 before Notary B.M. Chandrashekar. Henceforth, he shall be known as Vihaan Singh Bafila

I, DIVYA Hennur Munegowda W/o. Narasimhamurthy.G, 3042-G, Soukya, 7th Block, Arkavathy Lyt, Jakkur Po, Bluru-64 have changed my name to Divya.M (Divya Munegowda) vide affidavit dt.26.03.26 sworn before Notary S.Vijayakumar, B'luru.

I, MASOOD Basha, R/o No 146, 1st Main Road, 1st Stage, 1st Block, Near Ayesha Masjid, HBR Layout, Bangalore-560043 have changed my name to I Masood Ahmed vide affidavit dt: 25.03.2026 sworn before Notary Sumithra.N, B'lore.

I, Mr. A Deva Kumar, Ex. GNR, Army No. 15163128F, residing at No 3-12, Mahadevapuram, Vengalra-Jukuppam Post, Palasamudram Mandal, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh-517599, do hereby solemnly declare to change my dependents name from A Saatvik to Anamalamudi Saatvik & A Hamsikha to Anamalamudi Hamsikha in the document both the names are one and the same persons. In further we will continue our Name as Anamalamudi Saatvik & Anamalamudi Hamsikha, vide Affidavit Dated 24.03.2026 Sworn before Notary: Sudhakaran Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh.

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E-Mail: travancoresugars65@gmail.com
Website: www.travancoresugars.com

TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders (https://etenders.kerala.gov.in) are invited for Supply, Installation & Commissioning of 500 KVA Transformer And Dismantling & Buy-Back of the Existing 250 KVA Transformer At TSCL. **E-tender ID 2026_TSC_848009_1.** Last Date of Submission is 31.03.2026 at 4.00PM. For more details contact office/ website.

Thiruvalla **Sd/-**
24.03.26 **GM (i/c)**

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Dr. Veena Upadhyay
Chairman, Governing Body, Jan Shiksha Sansthan
Member, Society for Communication in Healthcare,
Former Faculty, Institute of Foreign Trade Delhi

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Welcome the Gathering	Dr. Shishta Nadda Basu, Member, Governing Body NBEMS
Effective Communication	Dr. Sitangshu Basu, Senior Surgeon, Max Hospital, Delhi, Member, NBEMS Professional Committee for Communication Skill Development
Non Verbal Communication	Dr. Rajesh Upadhyay, Member, NBEMS Professional Committee for Communication Skill Development, Senior Director & Head - Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Endoscopy, Max Hospital, Delhi
Empathy and Communicating with Patients & Families	Dr. Veena Upadhyay, Member, Society For Communication in Healthcare, Former Faculty Institute of Foreign Trade Delhi
Breaking Bad News & Difficult Conversations	Dr. Ajay Kumar, Ex Member, Governing Body NBEMS, Member, NBEMS Professional Committee for Communication Skill Development
Violence Against Doctors	Dr. Shivakant Misra, Vice-President, NBEMS
Team Communication & Conflict Resolution	Dr. Shishta Nadda Basu, Member, Governing Body NBEMS

Live Streaming

DATE & TIME : Monday, 30th March 2026 | 10:00 AM
VENUE: MM Convention Centre, Saveetha Dental College And Hospital, Velappanchavadi, Chennai

Man kills brother-in-law, surrenders at police station with body

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 30-year-old man allegedly bludgeoned his brother-in-law to death and later walked into Bannerghatta Police Station carrying the victim's body to surrender.

According to police, the accused, identified as Srinivas, who runs a dog kennel and is a resident of Bairappanahalli, arrived at the station on Thursday with the body in his car, confessing to the murder.

The deceased has been identified as Ranjith, 24, the younger brother of Srinivas' wife. Police said tensions had been brewing between the two after Ranjith was allegedly in a relationship with Srinivas' younger sister, who is already married.

Investigations revealed that Srinivas had called Ranjith to Bilwaradahalli near Bannerghatta under the pretext of resolving the issue.

However, during the meeting, he allegedly attacked Ranjith with a metal rod, striking him on the head and killing him on the spot.

After committing the crime, Srinivas reportedly drove to the police station with the body and surrendered.

The police have arrested the accused and have registered a case under Section 103 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

The body has been shifted for post-mortem examination, and the accused has been taken into custody for further investigation.

Ricky Rai's seized Lamborghini had a fake number plate

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Cubbon Park Traffic Police have registered a case against Ricky Rai, son of a former underworld operative Muthappa Rai, for allegedly using a fake 'fancy' registration number plate on his high-end Lamborghini Huracán car that was seized for performing dangerous stunts on M.G. Road.

According to the police, the case came to light following a citizen report on social media tagged to Bengaluru City Police.

The complaint, filed by police constable Shanmukha, stated that on March 21 the luxury car was seen driving rashly around 2.40 a.m. at Anil Kumble Circle under Cubbon Park Traffic Police limits.

Based on the complaint, a case was registered at Cubbon Park Traffic Police Station under Crime No. 45/2026. The vehicle was seized and entered under PF No. 08/2026 for further investigation.

During the probe, police sought verification from the Regional Transport Office (RTO), Bengaluru South. Authorities informed that the 'fancy number' had not been officially allotted to any vehicle.

Registered in Delhi

Investigations revealed that Ricky Rai had purchased the Lamborghini Huracán, originally registered in Delhi, but had not completed its re-registration in Karnataka, as mandated by law.

Instead, he allegedly installed a counterfeit number plate with a premium registration number.

Police said the fake number plate was used to evade identification while committing traffic violations, and potentially for other unlawful activities.

Based on the findings, Cubbon Park Traffic Police have booked Ricky Rai under Sections 318(4) (cheating), 340(2) (use of forged document as genuine), and 341 (possession of counterfeit instruments for forgery) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023.

Following the seizure of the vehicle, Ricky Rai, through his advocates, challenged the police action stating that he was not driving the car.

The driver of the car had not performed any stunt, but was only negotiating a bad patch of road, the advocate told the media, adding that the driver should be appreciated instead of being punished.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION
Gates Entry Have Been
Changed look at Map For Details

STAND INDEX

A STAND — ENTRY GATE: E1, INSIDE GATE: G6	B STAND — ENTRY GATE: E23, INSIDE GATE: G7	C STAND — ENTRY GATE: E19, INSIDE GATE: G9
D CORPORATE — ENTRY GATE: E2 OR E3, INSIDE GATE: G5	D LOFT — ENTRY GATE: E2 OR E3, INSIDE GATE: G5	DIAMOND BOX — ENTRY GATE: E8, INSIDE GATE: G1
E EXECUTIVE LOUNGE — ENTRY GATE: E2 OR E3, INSIDE GATE: G5	E STAND — ENTRY GATE: E17, INSIDE GATE: G11	F - BLOCK 1 — ENTRY GATE: E16, INSIDE GATE: G13
F - BLOCK 2 — ENTRY GATE: E16, INSIDE GATE: G13	GRAND TERRACE — ENTRY GATE: E18, INSIDE GATE: G10	H UPPER — ENTRY GATE: E17, INSIDE GATE: G12
M1 — ENTRY GATE: E11 OR E12, INSIDE GATE: G15	M2 — ENTRY GATE: E11 OR E12, INSIDE GATE: G15	M2 ANNEXE — ENTRY GATE: E13, INSIDE GATE: G14
M3 — ENTRY GATE: E13, INSIDE GATE: G14	M4 — ENTRY GATE: E13, INSIDE GATE: G14	MEDIA — ENTRY GATE: E11, INSIDE GATE: G15
P1 — ENTRY GATE: E8, INSIDE GATE: G3A	P1 ANNEXE — ENTRY GATE: E5, INSIDE GATE: G3	P2 — ENTRY GATE: E8, INSIDE GATE: G2
P3 - BLOCK 1 — ENTRY GATE: E2 OR E3, INSIDE GATE: G4	P3 - BLOCK 2 — ENTRY GATE: E2 OR E3, INSIDE GATE: G4	P CORPORATE — ENTRY GATE: E8, INSIDE GATE: G2
P LOFT — ENTRY GATE: E8, INSIDE GATE: G3A	P TERRACE — ENTRY GATE: E8, INSIDE GATE: G2	PLATINUM LOUNGE — ENTRY GATE: E22, INSIDE GATE: G8

LEGEND
E ENTRY / EXIT GATE
G INSIDE GATE
MEDICAL TRIAGE
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Bypoll: Cong. rebel retires from contest in Davangere South

Sadiq Pahilwan says he will extend full support to Samarth Mallikarjun

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Congress rebel candidate Sadiq Pahilwan on Friday retired from the electoral contest in the byelection to the Davangere South Assembly constituency, scheduled to be held on April 9.

The decision came following an intervention by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar. Congress legislators Rizwan Arshad and Saleem Ahmed had held talks with Mr. Pahilwan and succeeded in persuading him to step aside, said Mr. Shivakumar.

Mr. Pahilwan was unable to formally withdraw his nomination on March 26, the last date for withdrawal, due to delays in reaching him for discussions.

He announced that he would extend full support to Congress candidate Samarth Mallikarjun, son of Minister S.S. Mallikarjun, in the byelection.

The bypoll was necessitated following the death of Shamanur Shivashankarappa, sitting MLA.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah along with Sadiq Pahilwan and Rizwan Arshad, Shivajinagar MLA, at a press conference at KPCC office in Bengaluru on Friday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Pahilwan met the Chief Minister and expressed his intention to continue in the Congress.

Speaking at a joint press conference attended by Mr. Siddaramaiah, Mr. Shivakumar, and AICC general secretary and State in-charge Randeep Singh Surjewala, Mr. Pahilwan confirmed that he was stepping down in favour of Mr. Samarth.

Mr. Siddaramaiah said that while Mr. Pahilwan had been an aspirant for the ticket, the party followed its tradition of nominating a family member of the deceased leader.

He cited a similar instance in Bagalkot, where Umesh Meti, son of the late H.Y. Meti, was fielded.

Mr. Surjewala acknowledged that there had been some differences over ticket allocation, but said the issue had now been resolved with Mr. Pahilwan rejoining the party fold. Mr. Shivakumar insisted that Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan was not sulking on the issue of a Muslim not being given a ticket and was busy with Kerala elections.

Although Mr. Pahilwan has returned to the Congress fold, another Congress rebel, Subhan Sab, is still in the fray. The Congress has expelled him from the party for six years.

Forest Minister seeks report on State vets visiting Vantara

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU/SHIVAMOGGA

Forest Minister Eshwar B. Khandre has sought a report from the Karnataka Forest Department, demanding details of alleged visits by senior officials and veterinarians from the State to Vantara, the 3,500-acre private zoo run by billionaire Anant Ambani in Gujarat. In a note dated March 23, 2026, the Minister asked for details of the officials who made the visit, the reason for their visit, and who gave them permission for the same. The department has been asked to give a detailed report in seven days and issue a circular making it mandatory for anyone visiting private zoos or wildlife rehabilitation centres to obtain permission from the Forest Minister.

The note has been issued after Sameeksha Reddy, a 27-year-old trainee veterinarian, was recently killed in a hippopotamus attack in Tyavarekoppa Tiger and Lion Safari in Shivamogga.

Murali Manohar, veterinary officer of the zoo, told the media on March 20 that Ms. Reddy wanted to check the temperature of the animal by using thermal image scanning after a staff at Vantara advised her to do so. Mr. Manohar stated that upon learning about this, he sent her a text message to wait for two more days.

Eshwar B. Khandre. FILE PHOTO

According to the zoo officials, the trainee officer was attacked by the animal when she attempted to do the thermal imaging.

Sources from the Forest Minister's office said that on further enquiry, they were informed that several vets and department officials visited Vantara.

"The Minister wants to know who invited them and why. Vantara is a private zoo; we have several experienced hands at the State-run zoos in Karnataka who can give expert advice on any treatment. So, what is the need to contact the staff at Vantara?" asked an official from the Minister's office.

"Attending useful events like international seminars or special trainings are understandable. But if that's not the case, the government needs to know what is going on," he added.

Cong. terms fuel price cut a ploy to help oil firms, cautions of a hike after polls

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The ruling Congress in the State termed the reduction in excise duty on petroleum fuel by the Centre as a mere "balance sheet management and convenient accounting" to help oil companies profiteer by transferring their burden to the government and finally onto the people of India.

'Election gimmick'

In a joint statement issued in Bengaluru on Friday, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and AICC general secretary and State in-charge Randeep S. Surjewala alleged that the BJP government at the Centre was readying to hike gas-diesel-petrol prices soon after the forthcoming elections to various State Assemblies.

"As the West Asia crisis looms large, Nayara Energy (formerly Essar) has hiked the price of petrol by ₹5.30 per litre and price of diesel by ₹3 per litre. This is a prelude to the imminent hike in prices of petrol-diesel-gas as the BJP government awaits the conclusion of the elections to five State Assemblies on April 9 and 23," they maintained, adding the Centre is now only "trying to fool the people" by announcing reduction in excise duty.

"Over the last several years, the Modi government has collected ₹43 lakh crore by taxing petrol and diesel. This comes to about ₹1,000 crore every single day since 2014," they alleged.

"The price of petrol on May 26, 2014, during UPA rule was ₹71.41 per litre, while the price of diesel was ₹56.71 per litre. Now, petrol is selling at ₹102.96 per litre and diesel at ₹90.99 per litre in Bengaluru. Going by the crude oil prices in 2014 ($108 per barrel) and that before the war in West Asia ($70 per barrel), the price of petrol should be ₹61.60 per litre and diesel should be ₹56.99 per litre now. The rest is a sheer loot by the BJP," the three leaders further alleged.

"Similarly, the price of an LPG cylinder has increased from ₹412 in May 2014 to ₹913 in March 2026 – a rise of ₹501, which is 121.6% increase over 12 years. The international LPG price was approximately $880.5 per tonne in 2013-14, and it is around $542.5 per tonne in March 2026, which is lower by $339, representing a drop of about 38.5% over this period," they argued.

Randeep Singh Surjewala, AICC general secretary and State in-charge, along with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar at the press conference at the KPCC office in Bengaluru on Friday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

BJP slams CM for not attending video conference with PM

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra took exception to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah not attending the video conference with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said it reflected his "innate anti-Modi attitude".

Food and Civil Supplies Minister K.H. Muniyappa was nominated for the meeting.

"By choosing to not attend the video conference, Mr. Siddaramaiah has done a great disservice to the people of Karnataka," the BJP president added.

Meanwhile, welcoming the reduction in excise duty on petroleum fuel, the BJP has warned of an intense protest if the State government uses this opportunity to increase the fuel prices.

"The Union government has taken steps to reduce petrol and diesel prices. However, if the Congress government tries to increase prices and make profits, we will have to launch intense protests," Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok told the media.

Land encroachment: FIR against Sri Sri Ravishankar quashed

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a relief to Sri Sri Ravishankar, founder of the Art of Living Foundation, the High Court of Karnataka quashed a first information report (FIR) registered *suo motu* against him by the Bengaluru Metropolitan Task Force (BMTF) in September 2025, alleging encroachment on certain government land and a portion of Rajakaluve by him and others.

"There is not even an iota of allegation against the petitioner for land grabbing or encroachment... The proceedings, if permitted to continue, would become an abuse of the process of law against the petitioner and result in miscarriage of justice," observed Justice M. Nagaprasanna while allowing the petition filed by Sri Sri Ravishankar.

Named as respondent

The BMTF appeared to have named Sri Sri Ravishankar in the FIR solely because he was named as a respondent in a PIL petition, filed before a division bench of the Court against a real estate firm and others on the issue of encroachment of government lands, the Court said, while pointing out that the FIR lacked necessary legal ingredients to sustain a charge under Section 192A of the Karnataka Land Revenue Act, 1964.

From Page One

No marks-based assessment for third language in SSLC exam

He pointed out that many Kannada organisations and the Kannada Development Authority (KDA) had raised the issue of the third language, including Hindi, becoming a burden for schoolchildren.

"In addition, a total of 1.64 lakh students failed in the third language and 1.48 lakh students failed in Hindi during last year's SSLC examination. In many States, grading is being given instead of marks for third language," the Minister said.

Replying to a question whether subjecting third language to grading will not hinder Kannada language learning in schools where Kannada is taught as the third language, Mr. Bangarappa said, "About 96% of the schools in the State are teaching Hindi as a third language. In the remaining 4% of the schools, different languages are being adopted as the third language. Therefore, a separate policy will be implemented after discussing with experts so that Kannada is not affected."

The KDA, Karnataka Rakshana Vedike, and other stakeholders have welcomed the government's decision.

However, the Association for the Protection of Indigenous Languages has urged the State government to review its decision. "It is necessary to review the State government's decision on third language from the perspective of educational interest, personality development of students and the unity of the country," said Chidananda A. Patil, vice-president of the association.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (ELECT.)/CLZ
Lucknow Road, Timarpur, Delhi-110054
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Name of Work: Replacement of existing public lights alongwith Comprehensive operation and maintenance for Six Zones (Civil Line Zone, City & SP Zone, Karol Bagh Zone, Keshavpuram Zone, Rohini Zone & Narela Zone) under Jurisdiction of MCD including unauthorized areas for a period of 10 years.
N.I.T. No. 81/1 Dated : 27.03.2026
All the details and conditions related to this NIT may be visited on CPP portal **https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app** and MCD Website: **www.mcdonline.gov.in.**
Document Downloaded from: 27.03.2026, 17:00 hrs to **Submission End Date:** 17.04.2026 upto 15:00 Hrs.
Pre-bid meeting will be held on 07.04.2026 at 14:00 hrs in the Chamber of Chief Engineer (Electrical)-I, Room No. 204, 2nd Floor, E-I, Block, Civic Centre, Minto Road, New Delhi-110002.
RO No. 38/DPI/MCD/2025-26
Ex. Engineer (Elect.)/CLZ
E-mail: **eeelectii@gmail.com**

BHAKRA BEAS MANAGEMENT BOARD
(A Statutory Body under Ministry of Power, Government of India)
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
BBMB invites EoI for setting up of Integrated Renewable Energy Project at Village Neilla, Distt. Bilaspur (HP) under jurisdiction of BBMB.
The interested developers shall attend consultation meeting at BBMB Board Secretariat, Chandigarh, on **20.04.2026 (3:00 PM)** and submit their EoI by 04.05.2026
This EoI is non-binding and for preliminary market assessment only.
For detailed EoI, please visit **www.bbmb.gov.in**
241/PR/Bd Sectt./4 FOR YOUR BETTER TOMORROW SAVE ENERGY TODAY

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT
ENGINEERING WING
Office of the Chief Engineer, Arogya Soudha, 3rd Floor, Leprosy Hospital Premises, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bengaluru-560 023
Telephone No.: 080-29557023 E-mail:**cekhsdrp@gmail.com**
No: HFWD/EW/CE/TA-1/AE-9/Furniture Works_CIMS/TND/2025-26/4684 Date: 27.03.2026
TENDER NOTIFICATION
The Chief Engineer, H&FWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru invites tender from eligible contractors registered in KPWD in two Cover tender document system through Karnataka Public Procurement portal for the following works.
Description of work: Providing & Supplying Furnitures to Chikkamagaluru Institute of Medical Sciences at Chikkamagaluru **(Call-2).** Approximate value of work: **Rs. 816.12 Lakhs.** EMD: **Rs. 12.25 Lakhs.** Stipulated period for completion (including monsoon): **5 months.**
Calendar of Events: Last date for receipt of tenders: **27.04.2026 up to 16.00 hrs.** Date of opening of Tenders (Technical Bids): **28.04.2026 at 16.10 hrs.**
The tender details can be downloaded from the KPP Portal Platform. Tenders shall be submitted electronically at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and Tender Processing Fee shall also be paid electronically. Interested eligible contractors shall register on the KPP Portal Platform to participate in this tender.
NOTE: (1) All the rights are reserved by the undersigned for postponement or cancellation of entire tender process, rejection of bids / individual bid etc., without assigning any reason. **(2)** Henceforth, any changes in the schedule / contents will not be published through newspapers and further changes will be updated only on KPP Portal.
Sd/- Chief Engineer, H&FWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru

BANGALORE RURAL ZILLA PANCHAYATH
Office of Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Bangalore Rural, Anand Rao Circle, Bangalore - 560009.
No.EE/PRED/BNG(R)/TND NO-19/TS/2025-26 Dated: 23.03.2026
KPPP Tender Notice
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION No. 19/2025-26
DATED: 23.03.2026
Short Term Tender is invited through KPP Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D. Bangalore Rural, under Hon'ble Chief Minister's Infrastructure Development Scheme (CMIDP) Head of account. The work details can be obtained from the KPP Portal **(kppp.karnataka.gov.in)**. The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before Dated: **07.04.2026** upto **5.00** pm. Further details contact this office during office working hours.
Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division,
Bangalore Rural Dist, Bangalore.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

With deep sorrow, we announce the peaceful passing of our beloved

Major Ramachandran

20 May 1933-26 March 2026

Narayanan Ramachandran

a devoted husband, loving father, and adorable grandfather, passed away peacefully on the evening of March 26th, 2026. He was a highly evolved soul and lived a full life of wisdom and kindness.

Funeral Details

The formal viewing will be on March 29th from 9 am to 10:30 am at Prestige Ozone, Villa 256, Whitefield, Bangalore

Cremation will be held on the same day at 12 noon at Panathur Electric Crematorium, Bangalore.

98451 88972

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

"A life of discipline, courage, and quiet strength"

SGT. MOHAMMED ZULFIKAR OOMMER RAWTHER (RETD)
(04 Feb 1964 – 28 Mar 2025)
Indian Air Force:
07 Mar 1983 to 31 Mar 2003
Fondly remembered and deeply missed by
Reshma, Remya, Remi

In Loving Memory of

" V.R.G "
(Shri. V.R. GOPALAKRISHNAN)
Journalist & Businessman
DOB: 15/04/1932 DOD: 28/03/2015
Lives of great men all remind us, we can make our lives sublime, and, departing, leave behind us, footprints on the sands of time
Family Members & Staff
Sri Rama Lodge & Cafe & GROUP CONCERNS
Kanaka Sarovar Hotels
Kancheepuram / Chennai
SEETHARAMA KALYANA MANDAPAM, Vadakkencherry

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES
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Bengaluru: 98455 29981, 080 - 22071826
Hubballi: 0836 - 2338600
Mangaluru: 0824 - 2417575, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
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DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

Get, set, ready!

Prepping up: Police personnel during the training session at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium ahead of the IPL 2026 inaugural match in Bengaluru on Friday; holding area at the stadium; ticket scanning machine fixed at the stadium; Railings installed outside Cubbon Park Metro Station.
K. MURALI KUMAR

Chief Secretary reviews security arrangements

RCB, the defending champions, are set to take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in the opening encounter at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Several protocols have been put in place for crowd management at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium ahead of the match. FILE PHOTO

Karnataka's Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh chaired a meeting with senior police officials and Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) office-bearers to review safety measures for the IPL match that will be played at M. Chinnaswamy stadium on Saturday.

Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) are set to take on Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the opening encounter at the stadium. It will be the first big match being played after the tragic death of 11 fans during victory celebrations last year. Following the tragedy, several protocols have been put in place for crowd management.

The Chief Secretary sought details on security arrangements inside and around the stadium, traffic management plans, parking facilities, availability of drinking water, and other essential services for spectators. She also directed officials to assess passenger density on the Namma Metro, review train schedules, and strengthen security at metro stations.

Emphasising the need for vigilance, Ms. Rajneesh instructed officials to strictly adhere to all government-prescribed safety protocols and ensure that no untoward incidents occur during the tournament.

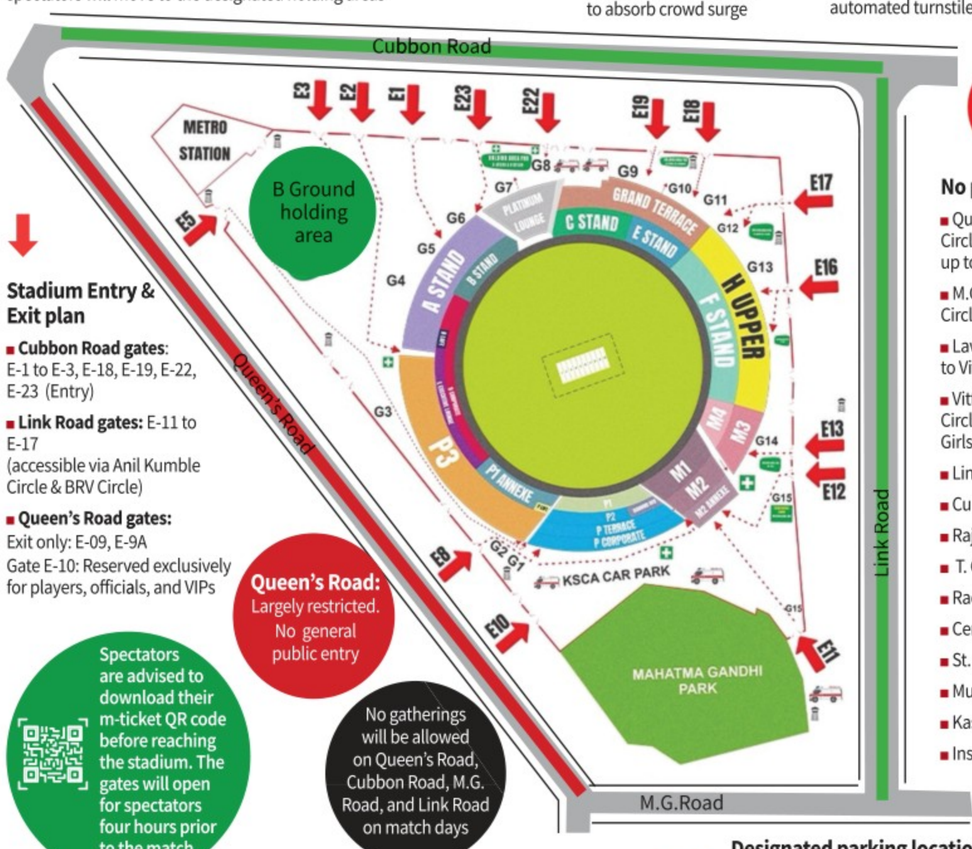
The meeting was also attended by RCB representatives, the City Police Commissioner, senior civic officials, the Metro managing director, and heads of relevant departments.

All you need to know before heading to the stadium

At the first gate, security personnel will conduct soft checks, including quick ticket verification, authenticity checks, and confirmation of the correct gate number. From there, spectators will move to the designated holding areas

Holding area: Spectators foray into a large designated holding area to absorb crowd surge

Turnstile gates: Paced, individual entry through automated turnstiles



Stadium Entry & Exit plan

- **Cubbon Road gates:** E-1 to E-3, E-18, E-19, E-22, E-23 (Entry)
- **Link Road gates:** E-11 to E-17 (accessible via Anil Kumble Circle & BRV Circle)
- **Queen's Road gates:** Exit only: E-09, E-9A Gate E-10: Reserved exclusively for players, officials, and VIPs

Queen's Road: Largely restricted. No general public entry

Spectators are advised to download their m-ticket QR code before reaching the stadium. The gates will open for spectators four hours prior to the match

No gatherings will be allowed on Queen's Road, Cubbon Road, M.G. Road, and Link Road on match days

No parking zones

- Queen's Road (Balekundri Circle to Queens circle, and up to CTO Junction)
- M.G. Road (Anil Kumble Circle to Queen's Circle)
- Lavelle Road (Queen's Circle to Vittal Mallya Road Junction)
- Vittal Mallya Road (Siddalingaiah Circle to Bishop Cotton Girls' School stretch)
- Link Road
- Cubbon Road
- Raj Bhavan Road
- T. Chowdaiah Road
- Racecourse Road
- Central Street (both sides)
- St. Mark's Road
- Museum Road
- Kasturba Road
- Inside Cubbon Park

Public advisory
Police have urged the public to avoid private vehicles and instead rely on BMTC buses and metro services to reduce congestion in and around the stadium

Cab & auto pick-up / drop points
BRV Ground (near Gate No. 6)
Manekshaw Parade Ground (near Gate No. 3)

Designated parking locations

- St. Joseph's Indian High School Ground (near Siddalingaiah Circle)
- Garuda Mall parking
- Freedom Park Multi-Level Car Parking
- St. Joseph's European School Ground, Museum Road
- Shivajinagar Bus Stand (first floor parking)
- UB City parking
- Kanteerava Stadium premises

B.Y. Vijayendra

Am opposed to MLAs seeking tickets: BYV

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra said that he was personally opposed to MLAs asking for IPL tickets.

"We legislators are not bigger or different from the common man. We should not be asking for special privileges. I am opposed to this idea of legislators asking IPL tickets," Mr. Vijayendra told the media in Bengaluru on Friday. Interestingly, Leader of Opposition and party leader R. Ashok was among those who sought tickets for the matches in the Assembly.

"When the gory tragedy (death of 11 people during RCB victory celebrations) is still green in our minds, it is insensitive to ask for tickets for ourselves. I am not in favour of it," the BJP president said.

59 school bus drivers booked

BENGALURU The city traffic police have booked 59 school vehicle drivers for driving under the influence of alcohol. They were caught during a special early morning drive conducted on Fridau, raising serious concerns about student safety.

Timings
BENGALURU

SATURDAY, MAR. 28	
RISE 06:19	SET 18:31
RISE 14:33	SET 02:48
SUNDAY, MAR. 29	
RISE 06:18	SET 18:31
RISE 15:29	SET 03:35
MONDAY, MAR. 30	
RISE 06:17	SET 18:31
RISE 16:21	SET 04:16

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	36	20
Bengaluru	36	20

Bengaluru Today
35°C The weather will be warm and uneasy. Night will be slight cool. Chances of light rain and thundershower.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
34°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds to occur.

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THE HINDU
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KSCA promises of free passes to legislators

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Former Indian cricketer and the president of the Karnataka State Cricket Association, B.K. Venkatesh Prasad, with Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, on Friday. ANI

A day after legislators lashed out at the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) for denying tickets to them, former India cricketer and KSCA president Venkatesh Prasad on Friday met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and assured them that two free passes would be given to each legislator for the opening match between RCB and SRH on Saturday and four free passes for the next matches to be played at M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru.

Sources in Congress said the KSCA has already given a pass each to legislators for the Saturday match and assured them of providing one more pass. Mr. Prasad met Mr. Siddaramaiah and Mr. Shivakumar a day after the MLAs demanded at least four tickets/passes each to watch the IPL matches. The KSCA president also met Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok, who had raised this issue in the Assembly, and during the discussion, the BJP leader told the KSCA chief to give four to five tickets to each MLA. Mr. Prasad told Mr. Ashok that he would not be able to give four tickets for the Saturday match, as all tickets were sold out. Mr. Prasad reportedly told the BJP leader that he would make efforts to provide two tickets each to MLAs who are keen to watch Saturday's match.

KSRTC bus catches fire near Lulu Mall

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A KSRTC bus carrying 21 passengers and crew caught fire near Lulu Mall in Bengaluru late on Thursday night. The incident occurred around 10.20 p.m. when the bus was en route from Majestic to Shivamogga. Passers-by alerted the driver, prompting him to immediately halt the vehicle and evacuate all passengers. Within moments, the fire engulfed the bus. Fire and emergency services managed to douse the flames. No injury or casualty was reported.

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು
ಆರ್ಟ್ಸ್ ಅಂಡ್ ಕ್ರಾಫ್ಟ್ ಮೇಳ
BANGALORE
ARTS AND CRAFTS MELA
Arts, Crafts, Handlooms & Lifestyle Exhibition
27 TH MARCH TO
5 TH APRIL 2026
Timings : 10.30 AM to 8.30 PM
WHITE HOUSE CONVENTION CENTRE
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60+ STALLS | 10 DAYS EXHIBITION | ENTRY FREE & PARKING FREE
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Chennithala alleges scam in software project in Kerala

Cong. leader says ₹206 crore contract to TCS was scrapped and a fresh tender was floated under 'mysterious' circumstances; he says both bidders under revised conditions were from Kannur

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala on Friday alleged that ground is being prepared in the Cooperation department for a major scam linked to the development of a 'uniform software solution' for 4,415 primary agriculture cooperative credit society (PACS) branches in Kerala.

Addressing a press conference, Mr. Chennithala said that the original decision to award the contract to Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) for ₹206 crore was cancelled, and a fresh tender was invited under mysterious circumstances.

> Since the Model Code of Conduct for the Assembly election is in force, the government is trying to obtain the Election Commission of India's approval for awarding the work. I plan to file a complaint with the EC
>
> **RAMESH CHENNITHALA**
> Congress leader

The CPI(M)-led LDF government is attempting to award the work to Kannur-based Kerala Dinesh Beedi Workers' Central Cooperative Society Ltd. which has quoted ₹58 crore for providing the software solution to 280 cooperatives, he said. At that rate, equipping all 4,415 cooperative society branches would cost around ₹914 crore, resulting in a loss of ₹700 crore to the State, Mr. Chennithala alleged.

The Cooperation department had issued orders accepting TCS's single tender in September 2023.

Mr. Chennithala's allegation is that the LDF government decided to cancel this tender, and reframed the conditions for bidding in such a manner that reputed firms such as TCS would not be eligible to apply.

Only two entities had bid - the Malabar Information Technology Cooperative Society Ltd. and the Kerala Dinesh Beedi Workers' Central Cooperative Society Ltd. He said it was significant that both bidders were from Kannur and controlled by the CPI (M).

"Since the Model Code of Conduct for the Assembly election is in force, the government is trying to obtain the Election Commission of India's (EC) approval for awarding the work. I plan to file a complaint with the EC," Mr. Chennithala said.

Anna varsity professor held for 'sexual harassment'

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The All Women Police Station at Abiramapuram on Friday arrested a senior professor of Anna University's Industrial Engineering Department on a complaint of sexual harassment filed by a final-year undergraduate student.

The professor has been suspended by the university administration.

The complainant, residing at the university hostel, said the professor, Gnanavel Babu, subjected her to sustained sexual harassment over the past three years, both in person and through obscene messages. She filed a complaint on Thursday night at the office of Commissioner of Police at Vepery, seeking criminal action against the professor. The complaint was forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mylapore. Based on the directive, the All Women Police initiated an inquiry.

In her complaint, the student accused the professor of inappropriate conduct, including repeated phone calls late at night and intrusive conversations. She said the alleged harassment began during her second year and intensified over time, causing her severe mental distress.

The police said a case has been registered under relevant sections.

Operating licences also included in e-auction: Federation

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Firing another salvo at the State government, the Federation of Karnataka Wines Merchants Association on Friday claimed that the Excise Department had included 86 licences that have already been renewed as part of the 579 licenses to be auctioned to individuals. Demanding a probe into this, the federation has said it will approach the Governor and Enforcement Directorate with a complaint.

The e-auction of 579 licences which was expected to fetch the cash-starved government a minimum of ₹600 crore has been currently stayed by the Karnataka High Court. As many as 27 individuals have approached the court against the e-auction, the federation said.

Corruption

The wine merchants had in January alleged massive corruption in the Excise Department, following which the Opposition BJP had demanded the resignation of Excise Minister R.B. Thimmapur. The Minister, however, has defended himself by saying that the accusations are coming since the State government is rolling out reforms in the department.

The federation's office-bearers told presspersons on Friday that defunct licences had been given away to Mysore Sales International Limited (MSIL) when 463 licences were issued to the State-run corporation in 2008-2009, and that sometime later, it had been given back to the original licence holders, only to now be listed as part of the e-auction.

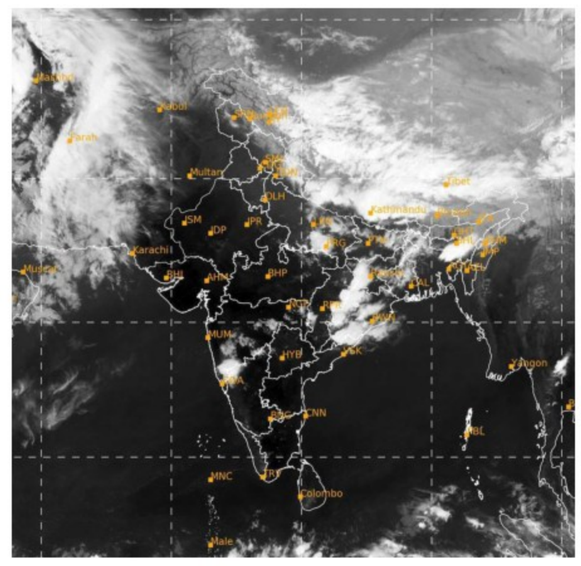
"Once the licence holder lost his licence to MSIL, it should have been over. However, over a period, licences had been issued back to individuals. These renewed licences have again been put on auction. The number could be much more than 86 since we have compiled details from 21 districts only," federation general secretary Govindraj Hegde said.

He further alleged that it is not just the renewed licenses that are being auctioned; 102 licences of MSIL that are being operated currently are also being auctioned. "The federation has petitioned Excise Minister R.B. Thimmapur and Chief Secretary Shalini Rajineesh, but no action has been taken against officials for the major blunder," lamented Mr. Hegde.

Meanwhile, Mr. Thimmapur told *The Hindu* that the government is not auctioning any licence that is currently operational. "We are only auctioning those licences which are defunct. The e-auction will take place only after the High Court vacates the stay," he noted.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Saturday: Heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, West Bengal and Sikkim. Thunderstorm accompanied with hailstorm very likely at isolated places over Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	34.2	21.4	Kozhikode	—	35.6	27.7
Ahmedabad	—	37.6	24.8	Kurnool	—	41.5	25.7
Aizawl	—	32.0	18.6	Lucknow	—	30.6	22.1
Allahabad	—	38.6	20.6	Madurai	—	38.2	22.6
Bengaluru	—	36.2	20.4	Mangaluru	—	34.6	26.5
Bhopal	—	37.0	19.8	Mumbai	—	34.1	26.0
Bhubaneswar	20.0	35.5	22.5	Mysuru	—	36.0	22.6
Chandigarh	0.4	30.0	18.0	New Delhi	—	34.6	19.2
Chennai	—	34.8	24.0	Patna	0.6	36.2	20.7
Coimbatore	—	37.2	23.0	Port Blair	—	32.2	24.1
Dehradun	—	30.7	17.7	Puducherry	—	32.3	21.9
Gangtok	6.0	15.5	11.5	Pune	—	36.7	19.9
Goa	—	34.6	26.8	Raipur	—	38.9	24.9
Guwahati	—	30.4	18.8	Ranchi	—	34.8	17.5
Hubballi	—	37.0	23.0	Shillong	—	21.4	11.4
Hyderabad	—	38.0	23.6	Shimla	—	17.8	11.8
Imphal	—	29.1	13.3	Srinagar	—	24.4	8.3
Jaipur	—	33.9	23.2	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.2	25.0
Kochi	1.0	32.4	27.2	Tiruchi	—	36.1	23.0
Kohima	—	33.2	25.0	Vijayawada	—	37.6	24.2
Kolkata	—	33.5	25.4	Visakhapatnam	—	33.1	26.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO 2	NO 2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.84	..81	49	 74	...148	.....
Bengaluru	...4	..36	22	 78	...137	.....
Chennai	...2	..18	.—	 44	79	.....
Delhi	.28	..70	80	... 107	...166	.....
Hyderabad	.17	..15	30	 71	87	.....
Kolkata	.12	..22	17	 79	72	.....
Lucknow	...6	..46	26	... 136	98	.....
Mumbai	.15	..88	13	... 117	...139	.....
Pune	..—	..43	27	... 176	...158	.....
Visakhapatnam	.47	..52	24	 61	...130	.....

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 277 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir recorded a healthy AQI score of 32

टैलीफैक्स – 0135–2522941 **BRIDCUL (ब्रिडकुल)** ई–मेल–bridcul@gmail.com
CIN No.:- U45203UR2008SGC032591
ब्रिज, रोपवे, टनल एण्ड अदर इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर डेवलपमेंट कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ उत्तराखण्ड लिमिटेड
(उत्तराखण्ड सरकार का उपक्रम)
पूर्व में उत्तराखण्ड राज्य अवस्थापना विकास निगम लिमिटेड
प्रधान कार्यालयः अवस्थापना भवन, 583–ठ, राजकीय आई0टी0आई0 निरंजनपुर के सामने, माजरा, सहारनपुर रोड, देहरादून– 248001

Ref: 515/BRIDCUL–929/26 **E-TENDERING** Dated:- 27/03/2026

On behalf of Hon'ble, Governor of Uttarakhand, E-Tenders are invited by Managing Director BRIDCUL, from the Contractors registered with any Govt./Semi Govt./PSU/Nigam in suitable Class & Category for the works given as below:-

S. No.	Ref No.	Name of Project	Estimated Cost (In Lac Including GST)	Earnest Money (In Lac)	Cost of Tender Document (In Rs.)	Time Period
1	BRIDCUL/ HQ Pith/88/ 2025-26	SITC of Fire Fighting System works at proposed 50 Bedded Critical Care Block at Govt. Medical College Distt. Pithoragarh	76.66	1.53	5000+ 18% GST	18 Months

For above tenders, document download start date is 31.03.2026 and Bid submission end date is 15.04.2026 at 1500 Hrs. The details of e-tender of above works can be obtained directly from website **https://uktenders.gov.in**
Changes, if any will be intimated only through website **https://uktenders.gov.in** **DGM (HQ)**

Government of Karnataka
POLICE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE KALBURGI CITY
No.ACT-3/STS/Drones/15/25-26(Call-2) date: 24.03.2026.

TENDER NOTIFICATION (THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT)

Commissioner Of police Kalaburgi City invites tender for **SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE OF UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE (DRONE) WITH ACCESSORIES FOR COMMISSIONER OF POLICE KALABURAGI CITY** Regarding Purchasing Drones and Their Equipments For Kalaburgi City. Eligibility for bidders in bid system (Techno-commercial Bid & Financial Bid) in e-procurement mode for Details are available in the site : www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in Last date and time for upload of e-tender in E-procurement platform as follows.
1) Commencement of download of e-Tender Form from website- http//eproc.karnataka.gov.in **No:ACT-3/STS/Drones/15/25-26(Call-2),** 2) Tender Publishing Date: 24.03.2026, 3) Last date & Time for online queries: 30.03.2026 Time:-05:00 PM, 4) Pre-Bid meeting date and time 01.04.2026 Time:-11:30 AM, 5) Last Date for Uploading of Tender in e-procurement platform on or before: 07.04.2026 Time :- 05:30 PM, 6) Opening of Technical Bid : 09.04.2026 Time:-11:00 AM, 7) Opening of Price/Financial Bid: 13.04.2026 Time:-11:00 AM, 8) Tender amount: **1,00,00,000=00**, 9) EMD Amount: 1,50,000=00, 10) Contact Address for communication: Commissioner Of police, Kalaburgi City, Kalaburgi Ph:08472-248500. storeseckbc@ksp.gov.in

Sd/- Commissioner Of police Kalaburgi City
DIPR/Kalaburagi/1216/KSMC&A/2025-26

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited
(A Joint Venture of GoI & GoK)
E-mail: pdretail@bmrc.co.in, Website: www.bmrc.co.in

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Sub: Tender for providing Transaction Advisory (TA) Services for Integrated Property Development at Nagawara Metro Station of BMRCL – reg.

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has invited bids from interested agencies via e-Tender through the Karnataka Public Procurement (KPP) Portal for providing Transaction Advisory (TA) Services for Integrated Property Development at Nagawara Metro Station of BMRCL. The tender is being conducted through an open competitive bidding process, all interested bidders are required to submit their bids electronically through the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal at: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

1	**BMRCL Tender Notification No. and date**	BMRCL/A(PD)/TA/NGWA/ 2025-26/1 Dtd.: 27/03/2026
2	**KPPP Reference No. and Date**	BMRCL/2025-26/SE0041 Dtd.: 27/03/2026
3	**Date from which Bid document available for download through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal, Govt. of Karnataka (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)**	27-03-2026
4	**Last date for seeking clarification if any**	10-04-2026 up to 17:30 Hrs.
5	**Last date and time for uploading of tender in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal platform**	22-04-2026 before 17:00 Hrs.
6	**Date and time of opening of tenders: Technical Bid & Technical Evaluation**	23-04-2026 after 17:30 Hrs.

Sd/- Director (Finance)

UNIVERSITY OF HORTICULTURAL SCIENCES, BAGALKOT
Office of the Registrar Udyanagiri, Navanagar, Bagalkote - 587104, Karnataka
No.R/UHSB/Affiliation/2350/ 2025-26 Date: 26.03.2026

NOTIFICATION

Invites applications for affiliation of private Horticultural Colleges to offer Undergraduate courses in Horticulture from the Managements/ Societies/ Trusts registered under Societies Registration Act of Karnataka situated in the Jurisdiction of this University. The last date for submission of the filled in application is one month from the date of Notification.
For further details, please refer the University website https://uhsbagalkot.karnataka.gov.in

DIPR/BGK/RO-NO-657/KSMCA/2025-26 **Sd-REGISTRAR U H S, BAGALKOT**

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಮುಖ್ಯ ವೈದ್ಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ,
ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆ, ಸಿರುಗುಪ್ಪ, ಬಳ್ಳಾರಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ.
ಫೋನ್:08396–220222 ಇಮೇಲ್:cmoghsiruguppa@gmail.com

ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್ ಮೆಂಟ್‌ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ತಾಲೂಕು ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆ, ಸಿರುಗುಪ್ಪದ ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಗ್ರೂಪ್–ಡಿ ಮತ್ತು ನಾನ್ ಕ್ಲಿನಿಕಲ್ ಖಾಲಿ ಇರುವ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.72,16,404/– ಸರಬರಾಜು ಮಾಡಲು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪ್ಲಾಟ್ ಫಾರ್ಮ್ ನಲ್ಲಿಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರ ಹಾಗೂ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜುಗಳ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು **http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**ನಲ್ಲಿ ವೀಕ್ಷಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಮೇಲ್ಕಂಡ ವಿಳಾಸದ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/–ಮುಖ್ಯ ಆಡಳಿತ ವೈದ್ಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು,
100 ಹಾಸಿಗೆ ತಾಲೂಕು ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆ ಸಿರುಗುಪ್ಪ–583121 ಬಳ್ಳಾರಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ.
ಡಿಐಪಿಆರ್/ಬಳ್ಳಾರಿ/1191/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Chamarajpet Division, 2nd Main, T.R. Mill Road,
Chamarajpet, Bengaluru - 560018.
No: EE/CMP/TEND/E-PROC/24/2025-26 Date: 27-03-2026

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT) - (SHORT TERM)
(Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPP Portal Only)

The Executive Engineer, Chamarajpet Division, BCCC, Bengaluru, invites Tenders from eligible Contractors registered in GBA / KPWD / CPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the Works detailed below. **(Standard Tender Document - KW-4)**

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Comprehensive Development of Concrete Roads, Drains and Footpaths in Bad Reaches and Allied Works in Chalavadipalya, Flower Garden, Siddarthanagara, Jai Bheem Nagara, Anjanappa Garden and Surrounding Areas in Ward Jurisdiction Ward No. 156, Chalavadipalya. **(2nd Call) - Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs) (Excluding GST): 200.00, EMD Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 3.00 (Rs. 1.00 Lakh Online Plus Remaining Balance BG / FDR)**
2	Comprehensive Development of Concrete Roads, Drains and Footpaths in Bad Reaches and Allied Works in Kasturbanagara, Rudrappa Garden, Vittal Nagara, Azad Nagara Surrounding Areas and Ward Jurisdiction in Ward No. 159, Azad Nagara. **(2nd Call) - Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs) (Excluding GST): 200.00, EMD Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 3.00 (Rs. 1.00 Lakh Online Plus Remaining Balance BG / FDR)**

Calendar of Events: 1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 04-04-2026. 2)** Pre Bid Meeting will be held on **06-04-2026 at 11.00 AM. in the Office of the Chief Engineer (Central, Zone-2), Annex-3, GBA Head Office, Bengaluru - 560001. 3)** Tenders must be Submitted online through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **on or before 4.00 PM on 13-04-2026. 4)** Technical Bids will be Opened on the Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in at the Office of the Executive Engineer, Chamarajpet Division on 15-04-2026 at 4.30 PM.** Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer, Chamarajpet Division, BCCC.

टैलीफैक्स–0135–2522941 **BRIDCUL (ब्रिडकुल)** ई–मेल: bridcul@gmail.com
CIN No. U45203UR2008SGC032591
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(उत्तराखण्ड सरकार का उपक्रम) पूर्व में उत्तराखण्ड राज्य अवस्थापना विकास निगम लिमिटेड
प्रधान कार्यालय – अवस्थापना भवन, 583–ठ, राजकीय आई0टी0आई0 निरंजनपुर के सामने, माजरा, सहारनपुर रोड, देहरादून–248001

Ref No: 513/BRIDCUL/1060/26 Dated: 27/03/2026

E-Tendering

On behalf of Hon'ble, Governor of Uttarakhand, E-Tenders are invited by Managing Director BRIDCUL, for the below work at Sr.no. 1 from the Contractors registered with BRIDCUL only in Category-I (Rs 05 to 10 Cr.) and for work at Sr. no. 2 from the Contractors registered with BRIDCUL only in Category II (Rs 02 to 05 Cr.) for the work given as below:

S. No.	Ref No.	Name of Project	Estimated cost (In Lac Including GST)	Earnest Money (In Lac)	Cost of Tender Document (In Rs.)	Time Period
1	BRIDCUL/HQ DDN/86/2025-26)	Construction of Approach road at Neem beach, Rishikesh Uttarakhand.	514.20	10.28	5000 + 18% GST	15 Months
2	BRIDCUL/HQ DDN/87/2025-26)	Construction of Approach road at Shivpuri, Rishikesh Uttarakhand.	475.00	9.50	5000 + 18% GST	15 Months

For above tenders, document download start date **28.03.2026** and Bid submission end **date is 13.04.2026 at 1500 Hrs.** The details of e-tender of above works can be obtained directly from website **https://uktenders.gov.in**
Changes, if any will be intimated only through website **https://uktenders.gov.in** **DGM (HQ)**

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
(An agency of Greater Bengaluru Authority for SWM)
Reg.Office:30/1, 1st and 2nd Floor, UNI Building, Thimmaiah Road, Millers Tank Bund Area, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560051.
Ref. No.: CEO/PS/PR/356/2025-26 Dated: 26.03.2026

:: Public Notice ::

Implementation & Enforcement of Solid Waste Management Rules-2026 By Greater Bengaluru Authority

1. Whereas, in exercise of the powers conferred under sections 3, 6 and 25 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (29 of 1986), in suppression of the Solid Waste Management Rules2016, the Solid Waste Management Rules-2026 (hereinafter referred to as rules-2026) is notified vide notification number S.O. 5369 (E), dated the 27.01.2026 in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii) which shall come into force **with effect from 01.04.2026.**
2. Whereas, the **Hon'ble Supreme Court of India** has also, in its recent order dated: 19.02.2026, **in Civil Appeal No.: 6174 of 2023** connected with **Civil Appeal No.: 7728 of 2023** directed that **"Environmental Compensation & Remediation shall be imposed on violators without any notice for violations of the SWM Rules-2026".**
3. Whereas, all waste generators shall segregate waste into four streams i.e **Wet, Dry, Sanitary and Special Care Waste.**
4. All bulk waste generators and AWPs/authorized private operators shall register themselves in CPCB's centralized web portal and file returns periodically to get **EBWGRC (Extended Bulk Waste Generator Responsibility Certificate)s.**
5. Whereas, the BSWML (GBA) in exercise of the powers conferred under SWM Rules & SWM Bye Laws 2020 has notified Authorized Waste Processors for management of bulk waste through digital operation in all city corporations limits. All bulk waste generators who have not adopted In-Situ processing shall tie up and dispose MSW scientifically. Digitized reports from AWPs shall be uploaded in the CPCB's centralized web portal. Bulk Waste Generators adopted In-Situ processing shall get certification from BSWML within 15 days (renewal of the same for every three months).
6. Bulk waste generators shall submit the application for certification of In-Situ processing(with approved technology) or undertaking upon disposal through Authorized Waste Processor (with name of agency & GST details) to the office of undersigned within a week.
7. **EBWGRC (Extended Bulk Waste Generator Responsibility Certificate)** will be issued purely in accordance with the directions/guidelines of CPCB/KSPCB/competent authority.

➤ In view of the above, general **public and all stakeholders are hereby requested to acknowledge the obligatory functions under SWM Rules-2026** which come into force from **01.04.2026** and same will be implemented strictly. If any violations, directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, National Green Tribunal, provisions of SWM Bye Laws 2020 and Greater Bengaluru Governance Act 2024 will be enforced whatsoever. (Copies of Hon'ble Supreme Court order, SWM Rule-2026 and SWM bye laws 2020 are available on **https://bswml.karnataka.gov.in)**. enerated by AWPs to BSWML as required in compliance to bye-law 14(7) of SWM Bye-Law 2020.

Sd/-
Chief Executive Officer
DIPR/CP/6487/SSC/2025-26 **Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited**

PROPERTYPLUS
HOMES AND REAL ESTATE NEWS | THE HINDU
thehindu.com/features/homes-and-gardens

Homes that heal

Blending Vastu wisdom with modern design, Indian houses are being shaped to support mental well-being

COVER

Lokendra Ranawat

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK PHOTO

The mental-health awareness movement has achieved its highest level of recognition in the present day, yet Indian homeowners have begun to understand how their home environments directly affect their mental well-being. Vastu Shastra presents ancient knowledge which now merges with modern design methods to create homes that provide both aesthetic beauty and mental-health benefits.

Psychology of space

People use emotion-driven design concepts to create spaces that exist for purposes beyond visual appeal. Research has shown that people experience changes in their mood, stress levels and mental health when their surroundings undergo physical transformations. Colours and textures and lighting and spatial arrangements work together to create specific emotional responses in people within their residential spaces. Indian traditional architecture centres around the design of homes as sanctuary spaces which create peace between mental and physical and spiritual aspects of existence.

The holistic method of modern Indian homes establishes three design elements which create calming spaces that help people develop positive feelings. The design uses soft earthy colour palettes which replace the harsh white and selects natural materials instead of synthetic materials. The aim is to design spaces which provide both stability and comforting spaces that help people escape from urban noise.

Wood has become the essential element that supports wellness-based interior design. Its natural texture and organic colour tones create an instant feeling of security which connects people to the natural world. The tactile experience of wood - its grain patterns, natural variations, and inherent warmth - triggers positive emotional responses that synthetic materials simply cannot replicate. The Wooden Street Veda Collection exemplifies this philosophy perfectly. The collection uses traditional Indian design elements to create wood products which provide emotional value and modern functional use. The designers created each product to fulfill its functional role while enhancing the emotional atmosphere of residential spaces.

The collection's clean line design together with the use of natural material and proportionate design elements produces furniture which maintains both timelessness and comforting appeal.

The interior-design approach used in Indian homes creates separate areas which help people experience different emotional states. The design of living spaces promotes social interaction and rest through comfortable seating which facilitates chatting and relationship development. Bedrooms function as peaceful retreats which use soft lighting and natural textile materials and furniture that creates a tranquil atmosphere.

Meditation corners and prayer spaces have become common in society because people now understand that spiritual health impacts their overall mental well-being. These areas often use low-sitting furniture.

The writer is co-founder & CEO of WoodenStreet.

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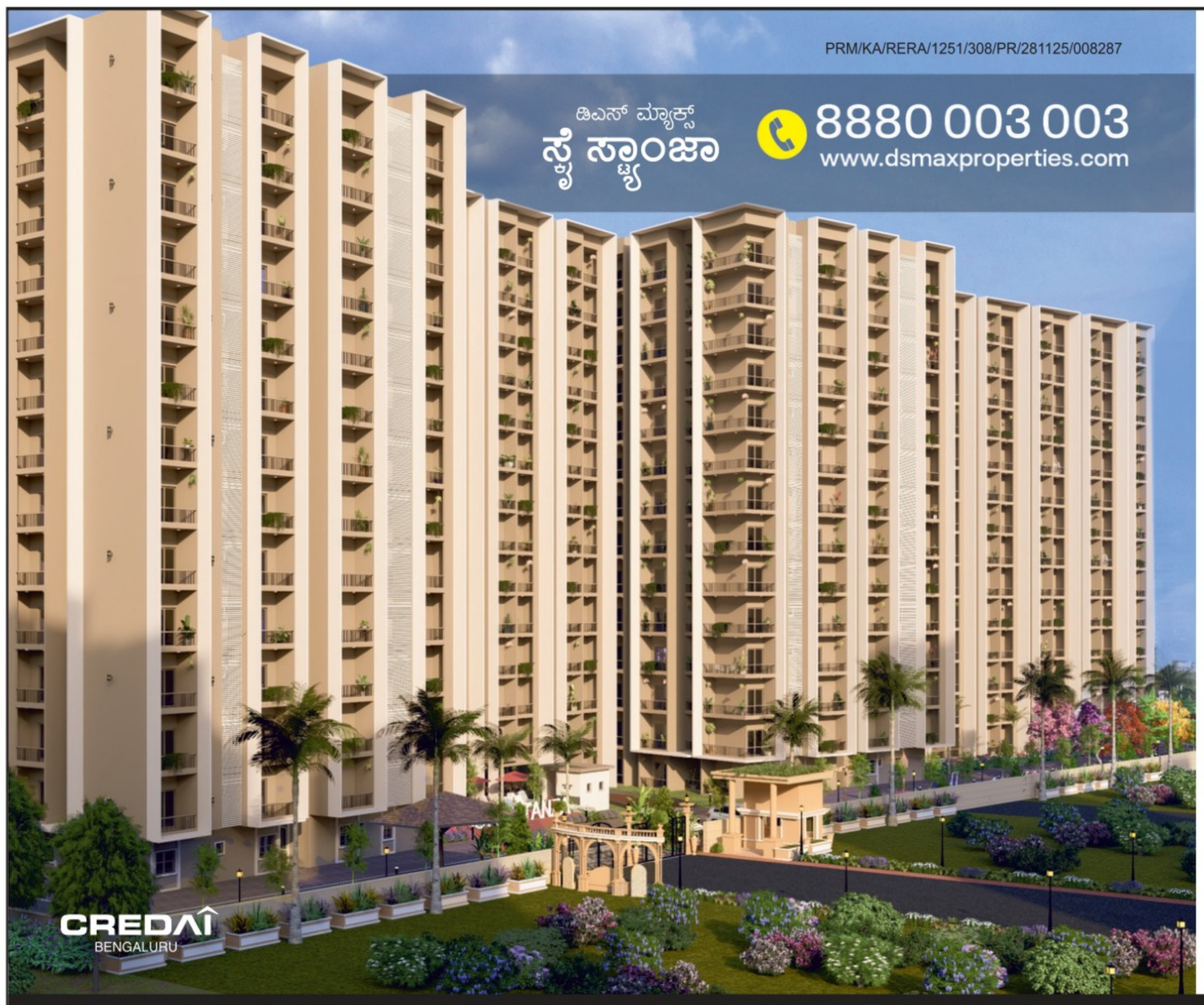

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A shade of dark

Reassessment of framework governing rights of transgender persons is due

Bulldozing a Bill through Parliament and pushing it into law while ignoring the public outcry is verily a failure of the democratic process. The way the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026 was rushed through both Houses of Parliament – amid Opposition walkouts and a storm of protests by the LGBTQIA+ communities – is condemnable. There was neither a transparent consultative process during the drafting of the Bill nor an informed discussion on its various aspects in Parliament. While the Bill was framed as an effort to correct past legislative shortcomings, there is an apprehension among stakeholders that it applied a heteronormative lens to a law intended to address complex issues of gender identity and human dignity. The Bill explicitly states: "The purpose was and is not to protect each and every class of persons with various gender identities, self-perceived sex/gender identities or gender fluidities..." This stance has left many within the community uncertain regarding their legal standing. By moving away from broader definitions, the Bill has altered the legal landscape established by previous judicial precedents, such as the NALSA vs Union of India judgment. True, concerns have been raised about possible misuse of allowing self-perceived gender identities for those seeking to avail of public facilities and government benefits earmarked for transgender persons. But, in the attempt to do away with the contentious issue of self-identification of gender without certification by a medical board, it shifts the focus toward mandatory biological markers – including chromosomes, hormones, and genitalia – or specific socio-cultural communities such as kinner, aravani, hijra or jogta.

Moreover, it is problematic to conflate the distinct concepts of sex and gender as done in the Bill. In effect, the Bill reduces the psychological and socio-cultural markers of gender to biological characteristics. Only those identifiably within the specified set of socio-cultural communities escape the stipulations of the legislation. Despite these concerns, the government has maintained that the Act reflects a "collective conscience", even as stakeholders suggest that the move limits existing protections instead of expanding them. Effective governance mandates engagement in consultation with all stakeholders. To address the current protests by members of the LGBTQIA+ communities, the government must return to a collaborative approach and move toward a rights-based law developed through a transparent consultative process. A new legislative proposal should aim to guarantee the equality of every citizen under the law, incorporate the perspectives of the LGBTQIA+ communities, and provide legal clarity while ensuring dignity for all. Otherwise, the government would appear to have created new problems in solving an old one.

A game for all ages

The IPL is benefiting from both youth and experience

Less than three weeks after India won the ICC T20 World Cup at Ahmedabad, another T20 caravan rolls into view. The Indian Premier League (IPL) commencing at Bengaluru's M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday, will traverse the country and conclude on May 31. Featuring 10 teams and 74 matches, the IPL has grown in stature and gained commercial heft since its inaugural edition in 2008. That just a few days ago defending champion Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) and Rajasthan Royals found fresh owners spending astronomical rates is a reflection of the league's high return on investment. Originally started as a counter to the rebel Indian Cricket League, the IPL remains the best among cricketing leagues across the globe. There is sadness too as the last edition, which crowned RCB, witnessed a terrible stampede outside the Chinnaswamy Stadium leaving 11 fans dead. When the IPL happened in 2011, shortly after India had won the 50-over World Cup, Virat Kohli had confessed that he, and many others from the champion side, took time to adjust to the league. Cut to the present, Suryakumar Yadav's men, spread across various IPL teams, will have the same predicament. Perhaps within a week, they should find their rhythm, especially Sanju Samson, who moved from Rajasthan Royals to the Chennai Super Kings (CSK).

Kohli, M.S. Dhoni and Rohit Sharma, constitute a troika that has been intrinsic to the IPL since 2008. At 44, Dhoni still remains relevant to CSK's plans. The three stars may no longer lead their respective units as the next generation has staked claim, but all three are vital to their franchises. The age-spectrum in the IPL ranges from veteran Dhoni to 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. The youngster, turning out for Rajasthan Royals, slammed a ton in the last edition. This second season would be vital for him as he races towards an Indian cap. Be it RCB or Mumbai Indians, which last claimed the trophy in 2020, or even an outfit such as Delhi Capitals that has never won the silverware, the IPL presents an opportunity to further their legacies. Among overseas stars, England's Jacob Bethell, who nearly ruined India's championship dreams in the recent T20 World Cup, would be an added attraction. Turning out for RCB, he would be Kohli's ally. While most injured Australian seamers are recovering, it is expected that Pat Cummins will gradually turn up for Sunrisers Hyderabad. Even Prithvi Shaw, on a comeback trail, would lean on this IPL to catch the selectors' attention again. The league's 19th edition is a reflection of its strong roots while ushering in fresh talent.

Beyond the rhetoric of the north-south divide

Shashi Tharoor

A fourth-term Member of Parliament (Congress) for Thiruvananthapuram (Lok Sabha), the award-winning author of 28 books, including, most recently, 'The Sage Who Reimagined Hinduism: the Life, Lessons and Legacy of Sree Narayana Guru', and the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee for External Affairs

For decades, the discourse surrounding India's development has been framed as a slow but steady march toward national synchronisation. The prevailing hope was that the economic dynamism of the south would eventually pull the rest of the country along, creating a unified middle-income power. However, as the Census and the subsequent delimitation exercise loom, a more fractured reality is emerging. The socioeconomic gap between what economist Rathin Roy calls the Great Indian Plain and the Peninsular States has not merely persisted; it has calcified into an existential fault-line that threatens the very structural integrity of the Indian Union. This is not merely a regional squabble over tax shares or language; it is a profound asymmetry where the locus of economic prosperity is increasingly decoupled from the centre of political power.

Distinct nations in one sovereign space

The physical and economic geography of modern India reveals two distinct nations inhabiting one sovereign space. On one hand, we have the Peninsular States, boasting per capita incomes that are at least double those of their northern counterparts. In States such as Tamil Nadu and Kerala, human development indicators – life expectancy, maternal health, and literacy – align closely with (and in some cases exceed) upper-middle-income countries in Europe or South America. On the other hand, the Great Indian Plain, encompassing the populous Hindi heartland of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, remains mired in a reality comparable to sub-Saharan Africa. While the heartland leads in population and fertility, the Peninsula leads on every other metric of modern progress.

This divergence has created a potential political problem of unprecedented proportions. In most healthy federal polities, such as the United States, Canada, or Australia, the most economically prosperous regions also hold the majority of the population, ensuring a natural alignment between wealth creation and political representation. India is treading the dangerous path once walked by the USSR and Yugoslavia – the only two major historical examples where an economically prosperous minority was tasked with subsidising a politically dominant but impoverished majority.

Following the next Census, if parliamentary seats are redistributed purely by population, the ratio of parliamentary seats in the south to the Hindi heartland seats will fall dramatically. The voice of the region that generates the nation's wealth will be further muffled by the sheer demographic weight of the region that consumes it.

A great Indian fault line exists but dialogue must ensure prosperity for many

This is the essence of India's existential crisis. When prosperity vests with the majority, they can conceivably subsidise the minority in perpetuity to maintain stability. But when a productive minority is forced to subsidise a relatively poor and deprived majority that holds the reins of dominant political power, conflict is not just a possibility – it is a probability. The current trajectory suggests a scenario where the South could increasingly be viewed by some as an extractive colony for the political ambitions of the Hindi-speaking "cow belt". A rupture between the heartland and the peninsula could well follow, unless handled wisely by both sides.

As negotiations follow on the revised delimitation of seats in Parliament, the idea of digressive proportionality, advanced in this space by Professor Santosh Mehrotra – "Reimagining delimitation", January 12, 2026 – goes the farthest towards balancing the interests of the more populous States of the north with those of the high-human development States of the South. It ensures fair representation in Parliament by giving larger States more seats but fewer per person and giving smaller States fewer seats but more representation per person. By balancing population size with State equality to prevent total domination by large States, it is likely to strengthen national unity better than any other system.

The South has a crisis

It would be a historic blunder for the southern States to frame this divide solely as a grievance against a biased central government or worse, against the Hindi belt. While the political asymmetry is real, the south faces a deep-seated crisis of its own that threatens to stall its progress toward high-income status. The region is currently caught in a socio-economic "middle-income trap". Despite high per capita incomes, the southern economy remains largely extractive and unequal. The gap between the wealth of the rich and the daily wage of the common labourer is staggering. In Tamil Nadu, the per capita income is triple that of Bihar, yet the daily agricultural wage is not even double.

This indicates that the fruits of the South's "growth explosion" are being skimmed off by a narrow elite, leaving the bulk of the population behind. The inequality that defines India is as present in the gated communities of Hyderabad as it is in the hinterlands of Patna (Kerala is arguably an exception). Patriarchy, misogyny and casteism remain the great unifiers of the Indian experience. Whether it is the blatant caste discrimination in rural Tamil Nadu or the flouting of traffic and environmental laws in Bengaluru and Chennai, the South has largely failed to translate economic wealth into social transformation. Literacy rates in districts such as Dharmapuri (Tamil Nadu) are lower than in dozens of districts in Uttar Pradesh, and the bulk of the wealth in States such as Karnataka and Telangana is concentrated in just three or four urban districts.

Still, the prognosis for a natural convergence between north and south is gloomy. A decade ago, one might have hoped for a "grand bargain" where the north caught up economically before political representation was rebalanced. But with a 300% differential in per capita income today, moving the needle will take generations. The second theoretical solution – massive population movement from the Hindi heartland to the Peninsula that "equalises" the demographic – is already happening, but it is creating a class of "internal outsiders" rather than a cohesive social fabric. These migrants still vote in the north and as Northerners, so they will do nothing to boost the South's political clout. The third scenario, where the Peninsula's prosperity grows so fast that it pulls the rest of the country up, is failing because the southern States are themselves punching below their weight due to weak institutions and a persistent disregard for the rule of law.

The need for sober dialogue

What is required now is a sober, intellectual dialogue that moves beyond the reactive rhetoric of regionalism. We are witnessing a situation where even prosperous States are forced to spend a large proportion of their resources compensating for economic failure and social fragmentation rather than investing in the future. The South's focus must shift toward internal inclusivity. True progress is not measured by the number of unicorns in a capital city, but by the daily wage of an agricultural labourer and the literacy rate of its poorest district. This is where Kerala alone scores well.

The divide between the South and the Hindi heartland is real, and the central government's push for hegemonic control only exacerbates the tension. However, the southern States must recognise that their economic lead is fragile. Without a radical commitment to social cohesion, better human capital, and the dismantling of extractive economic structures, they will remain trapped in a middle-income cycle, socially stagnant and increasingly, politically marginalised. The "grand bargain" for India's future cannot just be a political deal between New Delhi and the State capitals; it must be a social contract that ensures prosperity is shared by the many, not just the few. Only then can India hope to bridge the fault-line that, if it is allowed to worsen with the coming delimitation, threatens the Union itself.

India's growth claims, a clash with data reality

Pawan Khera

Chairman, Media and Publicity, Communication Department, Indian National Congress

For years, Indians have been told to trust the headline: the fastest-growing major economy, world-beating GDP, historic momentum. But ordinary people do not live inside headlines. They live inside salaries, grocery bills, job searches, school fees and small businesses that either survive or collapse.

That is why the real question facing India is no longer whether the economy looks impressive on paper. The question is whether the paper itself can (still) be trusted.

A major new study by Abhishek Anand, Josh Felman and Arvind Subramanian argues that India's GDP growth may have been misestimated for nearly two decades. Their analysis ("India's 20 years of GDP misestimation: New evidence", March 2026) suggests that growth in the post-2011 period may have been overstated by roughly 1.5 percentage points to 2 percentage points. That may sound like a technical dispute. It is not.

The impact of even minor variations

Even a two-percentage-point difference, sustained over a decade, dramatically changes the story of an economy. It affects how policymakers judge success, how investors allocate capital and how citizens evaluate their government's performance. More importantly, the critique highlights a deeper structural problem: in an economy where most workers remain outside the formal sector, growth estimates derived largely from formal-sector data risk missing distress where most Indians actually struggle against the vagaries of policy, epidemics and uncertainties to earn their livelihoods.

The mechanics are straightforward. India increasingly relies on data from organised-sector filings to estimate activity across the broader economy. But when the formal sector is easier to measure than the informal one, the national accounts can gradually become tilted toward what is visible rather than what is actual and representative.

In a country where tens of millions work in small workshops, roadside stalls, family businesses and cash-based trade, that distinction matters enormously.

What India needs is a restoration of independent statistical authority, with numbers describing the country honestly

It also helps explain why the last decade has felt so puzzling to many Indians. The official narrative celebrated a high-growth miracle. Yet, private investment remained subdued, real wage growth disappointed and manufacturing never delivered the employment surge that had long been promised. Jobs remained a persistent source of anxiety, particularly for younger workers entering the labour market.

Crisis after crisis

This gap between headline growth and lived experience widened after a series of economic shocks. Demonetisation in 2016 disrupted cash-dependent sectors that dominate informal employment. The rollout of the Goods and Services Tax imposed compliance costs that smaller firms struggled to absorb. Then, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the informal economy with disproportionate force.

When growth estimates rely heavily on organised sector indicators, shocks that disproportionately damage informal activity can disappear statistically even while they reshape employment and household income.

But the deeper problem runs beyond measurement. It lies in what many economists now identify as the central contradiction of India's current growth model.

Wealth has become increasingly concentrated in a relatively small segment of the population – particularly in large corporations and the financial elite – while the public programmes meant to protect citizens from risk and deprivation have weakened in reach or effectiveness. Growth is occurring, but its benefits are narrowing even as the economic safety net thins. In such an economy, headline GDP can continue to rise even while insecurity spreads beneath it. This is where the language of "formalisation" becomes politically convenient. Formalisation can certainly reflect genuine economic progress. But it can also mask a harsher transition: the small enterprise disappears, the large one absorbs the market, and the national accounts record the shift as efficiency.

A *kirana* shop closing its shutters is not necessarily a sign of national modernisation simply because a corporate chain can be counted more neatly. At this point the issue stops being purely technical and becomes democratic.

'Inconvenient data'

If the country's most important economic statistic is under serious doubt and debate, the natural response should be more transparency, not less. Yet, in recent years India's statistical ecosystem has moved in the opposite direction.

The delay in the Census forced policymakers to rely on population data from 2011. The 2017-18 consumption survey was not released after it reportedly showed a decline in household spending (interestingly, this was pre-COVID-19 data). A labour force survey indicating the highest unemployment rate in decades became the centre of controversy ahead of the 2019 general election, leading to resignations from the National Statistical Commission.

Each episode can be explained individually. Taken together, they raise a broader question about how comfortable the state remains with inconvenient data.

Statistics in a democracy are not decorative achievements to be displayed in speeches. They are public infrastructure. Citizens rely on them to judge performance. Economists rely on them to design policy. Governments rely on them to detect problems before they become crises. For a country of India's scale and ambition, credibility in economic measurement is not a luxury. It is foundational. India cannot solve unemployment with slogans, revive demand with hashtags or build investor confidence with celebratory charts. If growth is real, it should withstand scrutiny.

What India needs now is a restoration of independent statistical authority, economic indicators that reflect the lived realities of the informal workforce and the rural and urban poor, and an end to measurement shortcuts that obscure rather than illuminate the economy.

The numbers should describe the country honestly – not flatter the narrative of those in power.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Major concession

While it is too early to say whether Iran expects a quid pro quo for the favour granted (Front page, "Iran grants Hormuz passage to India and 4 other nations," March 27), the situation could be delicate for India. New Delhi may need to dispel any perception that it has taken Iran's side in its conflict with the U.S. and Israel, as that could send the wrong signal to both these India-friendly nations.

C.V. Aravind,
Bengaluru

Misleading

Factually incorrect and misleading information appears to have been provided in the Rajya Sabha for two unstarred questions regarding recognition of evening LL.B. degrees by the Bar Council of India. These are question no. 2520 (answered on August 10, 2023) and question no. 748 (answered on February 5, 2026). The Ministry of Law and Justice has claimed that evening LL.B. courses were discontinued from 2000-2001 and such degrees are not eligible for enrolment, with no data maintained on holders. This information is incomplete and misleading.

Tejinder Singh,
Rajpura, Punjab

Engaging

The article, "Dhurandhar: The Revenge and the perils of 'nationalist violence'" ('In the Limelight' – Text & Context section, online March 24/print March 25), was thought-provoking. The way the writer examined the intersection of cinema, nationalism and violence was intellectually engaging. The analysis of how films can influence public perception and shape ideas about citizenship and democracy was striking.

Subhasri Das,
Kolkata

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

GROUND ZERO

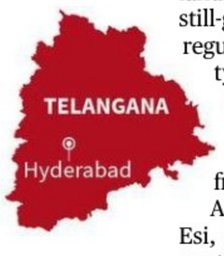
The Musi Riverfront Development Project will cover the city's 55-kilometre river course, with each phase addressing a portion of the river. The stated objectives of the project are: flood mitigation, an accessible riverfront, a connected city, sustainable development, and heritage tourism. NAGARA GOPAL

Anger on the banks of the Musi

With the Telangana government ready to implement the Musi Riverfront Development Project in Hyderabad, residents along the river are facing possible displacement and uncertainty over compensation. The Moosa and Esi tributaries, once seasonal streams, now flow with sewage and industrial effluents, raising questions about ecological restoration. **Swathi Vadlamudi** speaks to citizens and environmentalists

Thulasi Chandu, a journalist who runs her own YouTube channel, is one of the 417 occupants of the residential complex, Madhu Park Ridge, at Langar Houz. From her balcony, she gets a view of southern Hyderabad: the imposing 12th century Golconda Fort on one side and a sweeping view of greenery, which slowly gives way to a rising concrete jungle.

Down the slope of the plateau on which Madhu Park Ridge stands, the rivulet Moosa, a tributary of the Musi river, meanders through the landscape for 11.2 kilometres. Its course from the still-green Ananthagiri hills into Hyderabad is regulated by the Osman Sagar reservoir at the city's edge, built after the catastrophic floods of 1908. On a closer look, however, what flows through Moosa is a dark, almost opaque stream of sewage and effluents discharged from surrounding establishments.



About 500 metres away, another stream, the Esi, flows from Himayat Sagar, another flood-control reservoir constructed after the floods.

These two rivulets merge a short distance further, and together with continuous downstream inflows of sewage and effluents through the city, they form the Musi, a seasonal river, which has become a sinuous channel of perennial pollution. From the Ananthagiri hills up to Wadapally village in Nalgonda, where it flows into the Krishna river, the Musi is 240-260 km long, with 55 km of it flowing through Hyderabad.

"The stench is unbearable and there are swarms of mosquitoes," says Chandu. But neither is reason enough for her to leave her home, she insists.

Chandu is furious that the Telangana government is attempting to displace her and others along the stretch for its ambitious Musi Riverfront Development Project (MRDP). The government plans to turn the seasonal river into a perennial one, while developing leisure spaces and shopping areas, and reviving heritage structures along the banks. For people who have lived by the river for decades, however, this spells displacement.

Chandu argues that the people along the river should be made partners in the project. "We have endured years of the river's scourge," she says. "But when it is time to improve the river, we are being asked to leave. How is this fair?"

> We have endured years of the river's scourge. But when it is time to improve the river, we are being asked to leave. How is this fair?
>
> **THULASI CHANDU**
> Resident, Madhu Park Ridge

Residents react

The State government issued three notifications pertaining to property acquisition for the MRDP in the second week of February this year. One of the prominent acquisitions is 6.34 acres of land on which Madhu Park Ridge stands.

While the government claims that the property partly falls within a 50-metre buffer zone along the riverbank, residents argue that the concept of a buffer zone did not exist in 2004, when building permission was obtained. It was the Andhra Pradesh Building Rules, 2012, that fixed a mandatory buffer of 50 m from the river boundary on both sides in urban areas, and 100 m in rural areas, to prevent development in hazard-prone zones. Authorities say the buffer follows the Central Water Commission's 2025 guidelines.

G.V. Shekhar, a retired bank employee and Secretary of the B Block residents' welfare association, says he moved into the building in 2009. "By then, the construction had been completed with proper building permission. How did they [the government] give permission if it was an illegal structure? They cannot shift goalposts at their own whim," he says.

Residents – about 60% of them senior citizens and defence personnel – have staged demonstrations multiple times, and conducted a postcard campaign opposing the move. Madhu Park Ridge has become a rallying point for nearby communities whose properties are marked for acquisition. Though Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has promised, through various media, compensation, nothing is on paper yet.

A few representatives of the communities who met the managing director of the Musi Riverfront Development Corporation, E.V. Narasimha Reddy, say they were given three options.

Shekhar spells them out: "The first was to allow the structure [Madhu Park Ridge] to remain, but prohibit transactions [on selling or transferring the apartments]. The second was to identify seven acres of government land where we could construct another complex, using the money deposited in our accounts by the government. The third was to buy our choice of apartments from 11 identified gated communities."

With specific details lacking, such as the location of the land to be given or the amount to be deposited in the bank, the residents say they have not been able to make an informed choice. In fact, many of them do not know about the current baseline market price fixed by the government, in case of acquisition.

Neither confirming nor denying the offer made to residents, Narasimha Reddy says the notification was issued under the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (RFCTLARR) Act, 2013, through the district collector. A 2017 amendment to the Act is used to exempt the project from the mandatory Social Impact Assessment under the RFCTLARR Act.

The only alternative on the table is transferable development rights (TDRs) in lieu of monetary compensation – a mechanism the cash-strapped government has been promoting enthusiastically of late.

Sambasiva Rao, a senior citizen, says the residents have not been consulted on the acquisition. He says the revenue department announced a Gram Sabha on February 16. The Gram Sabha was then postponed to February 21 (Saturday) since most residents wanted it to be held during a weekend. "But it was suddenly cancelled a day earlier and we were given no reason," says Rao. "We have all filed objections."

Rao adds that multiple colonies on the 9-km stretch from Narsingi up to Bapu Ghat will be affected by the project.

He thinks the TDR is not an option. "What use are TDRs to us after we have been made homeless at this age? Are we supposed to wait on the streets until we can make money," Rao asks.

While the CWC's technical guidelines on flood plain zoning define the regulatory or buffer zone as the area with flood frequency of 5-25 years, Rao claims that water has never touched the compound wall of their complex since they occupied the flats in 2009-10. "Moosa cannot be classified as a river. At the most, it is a stream," Rao says. Irrigation records, however, mention both Moosa and Esi as part of Musi river.

The Madhu Park Ridge apartment complex in Hyderabad is one of the sites likely to be affected by the Musi River Development Project. NAGARA GOPAL

An ambitious plan

On March 8, during an event, Revanth Reddy remarked that the value of the apartments will go down to zero as the government had prohibited all transactions in the buffer zone. These comments have pushed the residents into a corner. They joined forces with Musi Jan Andolan (MJA), a collective of residents from the Musi river bed and buffer zones, NGOs, activists, and environmentalists, demanding that the Detailed Project Report be made public, residents' rights be protected, and the river be rejuvenated with a focus on river basin ecology.

The MJA was formed after the State government allegedly forcibly shifted around 400 slum dwellers from the river bed to various locations across the city in 2024, without prior notice. Opposition parties including the Bharat Rashtra Samithi and the Bharatiya Janata Party also voiced their opposition to the project.

Less than a week after his 'zero value' statement, Revanth Reddy revealed the grand plans for the MRDP at an event attended by scores of investors, NGO representatives, architects, heritage experts, and others.

At the same event where the Chief Minister was present, Narasimha Reddy unveiled the detailed project plan for the MRDP, which is to be implemented in five phases. The project will cover the city's 55-kilometre river course, with each phase addressing a portion of the river. The stated objectives of the project are: flood mitigation, an accessible riverfront, a connected city, sustainable development, and heritage tourism. The government believes it will lead to both revenue and employment.

The first phase of the MRDP will cover 11.2 km of the Moosa and 9.8 km of the Esi rivers, up to their confluence where Mahatma Gandhi's ashes were immersed. A Gandhi Sarovar Project is planned there on 200 acres, featuring a 123-feet statue of Gandhi, a cultural centre, and a museum on his life. Phase I is estimated to cost ₹6,500-7,000 crore, excluding land acquisition.

An East-West road corridor will run along both sides of the river on a Build-Operate-Transfer model, with entry restricted by tolls. The project includes promenades, bridges, viewpoints, walkways, greenery, and marquee developments, requiring acquisition of over 10,000 properties across 3,279 acres on the whole.

Sewage treatment plants with a combined capacity of nearly 3,000 million litres per day are planned to treat waste from 27 major stormwater drains. Clean-up will also involve removal of vegetation, silt, and sludge. For ecological restoration, nature-based solutions such as surface and floating wetlands, sedimentation basins, and vegetated swales will be implemented.

A 2024 research paper, 'Geochemical Studies of Sediments and Waters of Musi River in Parts of Hyderabad City, Telangana, India', by Pothuri Ramesh Chandra Phani (Cyient Limited) and Kanchi Rajendra Prasad (Geology Department, Osmania University), examined surface water and sediment samples from various locations along the Musi River in the city. The study confirmed that the river is heavily contaminated with chemical pollutants – a toxic cocktail beyond repair.

Removing the sludge and silt will require dredging tonnes of toxic waste, but Narasimha Reddy's presentation did not outline any specific plan for its treatment. "Roughly 90% of what flows through the Musi in Hyderabad is sewage and industrial effluent – around 1,800 million litres a day pouring in through 64 outlets, carrying pharmaceutical waste from the city's bulk drug manufacturing hubs," says Donthi Narasimha Reddy, an environmentalist and public policy professional.

> Let them first arrest the pollution released into the river from the industries lining the northern parts of Hyderabad before talking about a clean-up
>
> **JEEVAN KUMAR**
> Human Rights Forum

Jeevan Kumar from the Human Rights Forum, which is part of MJA coalition, says, "The project has no component for addressing the pollution at source. Let them first arrest the pollution released into the river from the industries lining the northern parts of Hyderabad before talking about a clean-up."

The MJA has written to the project's international funding agency, the Asian Development Bank, flagging several violations that it says would go against the agency's environmental and social framework.

Restoring the river

The idea of Musi riverfront development was first proposed in 1997, when the then government rerouted the river through a drain built in the river bed to enable beautification of the surroundings. Residents of slums along the Musi river were evicted to Nandanavanam, a slum on the eastern side of Hyderabad, but concrete bunds were destroyed in 2000 when the river was in spate, and the project was abandoned.

In 2009, a rubber dam was built to hold water for tourism, but it led only to weed growth, garbage accumulation, and mosquitoes. The Musi Riverfront Development Corporation Limited (MRDCL) was formed in 2017 under the previous BRS government, with plans for 14 bridges inspired by the Seine in Paris.

The current Congress government has engaged a consortium under Singapore-based Meinhardt Group to prepare a Detailed Project Report, which will be shared publicly after vetting by the ADB, according to Minister D. Sridhar Babu. The plan cites global riverfront projects such as Cheonggyecheon in Seoul, Sumida in Tokyo, Seine in Paris, Thames in London, and Sabarmati in Ahmedabad.

While the Thames revival took 168 years from the 'Great Stink' of 1858, Cheonggyecheon was a more recent, heavily engineered urban stream project, highlighting the varied approaches and timelines of riverfront development worldwide.

"Restoring the Musi means restoring the basin, replanting vegetation, protecting tributary streams, and reviving the traditional tank and pond systems that once recharged groundwater across 40 villages," says Donthi Narasimha Reddy. "Ecological restoration of the catchment isn't just background work – it is the work, and everything downstream depends on doing it right." He stresses on dealing with existing encroachments on the river banks in a humane manner.

The MRDP plans to divert 2.5 tmcft of water from Mallanna Sagar on the Godavari into the Musi to keep it flowing year-round.

To protect the twin reservoirs, which supply the city's drinking water, a 1996 order banned construction and polluting industries across the 11,000-square-kilometre catchment spanning 84 villages.

With Godavari water slated for diversion, fears have emerged that the decades-old order could be scrapped, threatening the hill streams and opening the catchment to real estate. At the project unveiling, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said: "We will do real estate, why not?"

BRS leaders T. Harish Rao and K.T. Rama Rao have criticised the project, alleging it uses the Musi as a pretext to take over prime land for private real estate interests. MJA representatives Meera Sanghamitra, K. Sajaya, and Varghese Theckanath, during a media interaction, alleged that the state was prioritising real-state driven infrastructure and tourism ventures over ecological restoration and community rights.

People affected

Meanwhile, documentary filmmaker Farhat Beig is not convinced he was lucky to have narrowly avoided buying an apartment in Madhu Park Ridge. After renting for a few years, he had finally decided to acquire a flat, paying a token advance just two days before the acquisition notification appeared in the newspaper.

"I explored the whole city for a secular place to stay in before I found this flat. I wanted my seven-year-old daughter to grow up in a secular atmosphere, which exists here. We have people from journalism, the defence, and several other fields and socio-cultural backgrounds, which is rare these days," Beig says. With registrations now banned, he will have to start his search all over again.

Not everyone is as fortunate. Loveleena, an event planner and single mother, moved into her ₹2.5-crore duplex three years ago. The Chief Minister's remark about "zero value" haunts her.

"It is devastating," she says. "I still have a loan of ₹1.02 crore. Moving is not an option. We will fight this in court."

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From Page One

Petrol, diesel excise duty cut; prices won't change

The net charge on Central revenues from all the changes will be ₹5,500 crore over 15 days, he added.

"The excise reduction is not being passed on as a price cut at the pump," the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas said in a statement. "Instead, it directly reduces the under-recoveries being absorbed by public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) – IOCL, BPCL, HPCL – who have continued to supply fuel to Indian consumers at prices well below their cost of supply."

Unpredictable situation

The CBIC will review these rates on a fortnightly basis, based on import trends and observed revenue implications.

"The situation is dynamic; it is not business as usual, where there is a certain predictability," Mr. Chaturvedi said. "Any implication on that [revenues] will have to factor in the actual supplies of goods coming into the country. Even within a limited period of a fortnight, the department will also have to look at supplies before coming up with a realistic implication as far as the revenue is concerned."

The West Asian conflict's impact on the seaborne energy trade had pushed Brent crude futures to more than $111 per barrel on Friday evening.

Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri shut down rumours about a potential lockdown due to the fuel crisis as "completely false". In a social media post, he said: "Let me state this clearly, there is no such proposal under consideration by the Government of India," he wrote.

He noted that the government has taken a huge hit on taxation revenues through the excise duty reduction.

There is little clarity, however, on the quantum of losses faced by state-run OMCs. According to Mr. Puri, at the current international prices of crude, OMC losses stand at approximately ₹24 a litre for petrol and ₹30 a litre for diesel.

According to his Ministry's statement later in the day, however, OMCs face under recoveries of about ₹26 for every litre of petrol and ₹81.90 a litre of diesel, adding that this works out to about ₹2,400 crore of under recoveries being absorbed by the OMCs every day.

While public sector OMCs are currently holding fuel prices level despite the spiralling global prices, some private firms are beginning to pass on their higher input costs to consumers.

On Thursday (March 26, 2026), privately-owned refiner Nayara Energy increased petrol prices by ₹3 a litre, and by ₹5 a litre of diesel, citing the "unprecedented challenges in the industry, impacting several aspects of fuel disruption and availability".

5 killed as avalanche strikes Zojila Pass

However, the casualties were reported from three or four vehicles that went under the snow. The highway has been closed for traffic.

"I have directed the Deputy Commissioner and Senior Superintendent of Police of Kargil to visit the spot and mobilise relief and rescue operations. All government agencies, including disaster relief forces and the Border Road Organisation, have been put on high alert," said Ladakh Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena. He said he was "personally monitoring the situation."

Union Minister Jitendra Singh said: "My sincere condolences to the bereaved families. All required assistance is being provided to the injured."

J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also expressed deep sorrow over the tragic loss of lives.

Khalil Ahmad Poswal, Senior Superintendent of Police, Ganderbal, said two more persons were feared trapped and rescue operations were on.

Modi stresses Centre-States cooperation in meet with CMs

PM calls for 'Team India' effort to ensure the supply of fuel and fertilizers, and crackdown on hoarders and rumour-mongers amid Iran war; he recalls 'collective response' during pandemic

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The PM called for special focus on border and coastal States to address challenges related to shipping and essential supplies. ANI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday stressed the need for coordination between the Centre and States to overcome the supply chain crisis engendered by the war in West Asia. He also called for a "Team India" effort to ensure the supply of fuel and fertilizers, and a crackdown on hoarders and rumour-mongers.

It was the first such meeting held by Mr. Modi with Chief Ministers and Lieutenant-Governors of non-poll-bound States and Union Territories amid the ongoing conflict in West Asia that began on February 28.

Among those who attended the meeting were Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu; Uttar Pradesh's Yogi Adityanath; Telangana's Revanth Reddy; Punjab's Bhagwant Mann; Gujarat's Bhupendra Patel; Jammu and Kashmir's Omar Abdullah; Himachal Pradesh's Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu; and Arunachal Pradesh's Pema Khandu. Karnataka Food and Supplies Minister K.H. Muniyappa attended the meeting instead of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah, Cabinet Secretary T.V. Somanathan and Home Secretary Govind Mohan were also present in the meeting.

Mr. Modi said that India had prior experience in dealing with similar global disruptions. "He recalled the collective response during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the Centre and States worked together as 'Team India' to mitigate the impact on supply chains, trade, and daily life. He underscored that the same spirit of cooperation and coordination remains India's greatest strength in navigating the present circumstances," stated a release.

Stress was laid on the need for advance planning in agriculture sector, particularly in monitoring fertilizer storage and distribution ahead of Kharif season. He called for special focus on border and coastal States to address any emerging challenges related to shipping, essential supplies, and maritime operations.

He emphasised the importance of maintaining public confidence, noting that assurance regarding the availability of essential commodities would help prevent unnecessary panic. The Union government has also set up a Group of Ministers to regularly coordinate during the crisis.

5 India-bound LPG ships stay anchored near Hormuz Strait

M. Kalyanaraman
CHENNAI

Five LPG carriers, all Indian flagged and bound for India, are anchored north off Dubai-Ras Al Khaimah, just southwest of the Strait of Hormuz, as per ship tracker websites.

Appearing to bunch together so they can troop out of the strait, these ships carry more than 1.7 lakh tonnes of LPG – equivalent to nearly six days of India's current import requirements. But they were not moving on a day Iran seemed to clamp down on any ship movement across the strait after earlier saying it would approve ships of friendly countries to pass through.

On Friday, Iran's Revolutionary Guards said that they had turned back three ships trying to transit the Strait of Hormuz, adding the route was closed to vessels travelling to and from ports linked to its "enemies". "This morning, following the lies of the corrupt U.S. president claiming that the Strait of Hormuz was open, three container ships of different nationalities... were turned back after a warning from the IRGC Navy," the Guards said on their Sepah News website. A total of 26 ships have been approved by Iran to transit the strait recently, using a route around Larak Island just off the country's coast, dubbed the "Tehran toll booth" by leading shipping journal *Lloyd's List*. Most were Greek- and Chinese-owned, as well as other Indian-, Pakistani- and Syrian-owned vessels.

Iran had previously announced that ships of India and some other countries – Russia, Iraq, Pakistan, China and Thailand – can pass the strait. However, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi had said that the U.S., Israel and some Gulf States involved in the current war will not be allowed to pass through the strait.

(With inputs from AFP)

Finance Minister rejects rumours of a lockdown

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman speaks in Rajya Sabha during the Budget Session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in the Rajya Sabha on Friday that the Centre is actively responding to the rapidly changing situation in the country following the war in West Asia. She urged certain political leaders to stop fearmongering and said the government has no plans to go in for a lockdown.

Replying to a debate on the second Appropriation Bill and the Finance Bill, both of which were returned after a voice vote, Ms. Sitharaman said neighbouring countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh have announced lockdowns, restricting movements and public events. "We are not doing this. But rumours are being spread by some leaders that there will be a lockdown. There is no plan for a lockdown in India. These leaders must stop spreading rumours. They are engaging in rumour-mongering to create panic among the public. Lockdown is in Pakistan, not in India," the Finance Minister said.

She said among its neighbourhood countries, India is maintaining a level of stability. "The positive message to the public is to face this situation in a united manner. The government is active and responding to the rapidly changing situation," she said after Opposition MPs raised issues of cooking fuel shortage across the country and the plight of Indian migrant workers in West Asia.

Maintaining that international crude oil prices have surged within a month of the West Asia conflict, she said consumer prices of petrol and diesel increased all over the world and in Southeast Asian nations the increase is 30 to 50%.

"We are managing carefully. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has told us that there should not be any burden on the citizens of India. That's the guidance given to me," she said.

"The volatility of cost and supply constraints will not hit the ordinary citizens. Price will remain unchanged for the citizens," she said.

Answering questions on unemployment, she said the government is creating jobs and it has resulted in distribution of 11 lakh appointment letters publicly.

Centre says there is no need to panic over fertilizer stocks

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

J.P. Nadda

Amid the ongoing war in West Asia, the Union government on Friday assured the Lok Sabha that there was no need to panic as steps have been taken to ensure that fertilizer is available to farmers whenever required.

Union Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister J. P. Nadda said India has adequate stocks of fertilizers. He was replying to a supplementary question on the measures the government is taking to ensure availability amid the ongoing West Asia war.

The ongoing conflict is disrupting key maritime routes and, specifically, the supply of natural gas and ammonia to India, threatening to reduce domestic fertilizer production by 10-15%.

Mr. Nadda said he has spoken to State Agriculture Ministers on Thursday and informed them about availability of fertilizers.

"I want to assure the citizens of the country the government has taken steps to ensure that fertilizer is available to farmers whenever required. We have sufficient reserves in place. There is no need to panic," the Minister said.

In response to a question from Congress MP Manish Tewari on whether the government was looking at newer markets for fertilizer imports, he said there were sufficient reserves for the Kharif season.

"We are also exploring diversification by tapping into new markets and regions to secure raw materials for fertilizers. We have developed a strategy to ensure their availability," he said.

Stronger trade corridors and supply chains needed, says Jaishankar

The Hindu Bureau
LONDON/NEW DELHI

As the U.S.-Israel war against Iran approached the close of its fourth week, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar discussed India and the Global South's concerns about food, fuel, and fertilizer shortages with his counterparts from the G-7 advanced economies and others, according to the Ministry of External Affairs. Mr. Jaishankar is on the second day of his visit to Vaux-de-Cernay, France, for the G-7 Foreign Ministers meeting.

He spoke at two sessions, one on global governance, peacekeeping and humanitarian aid delivery, and a second session on the India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor. He stressed the importance of having resilient trade corridors, according to MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

"The uncertainties arising from the conflicts in West Asia only make a stronger case for more resilient trade corridors and supply chains," Mr. Jaishankar said in a post on X. "At the same time, India's FTAs with the European Union, EFTA [European Free Trade Association] members and UK have enhanced the utility of IMEC," he added.

"Underscored the importance of freedom of navigation for global economic security. As well as the threat of narco-terror linkages," Mr. Jaishankar said.

Energy and commodity markets have been reeling under the impact of the conflict in West Asia, with Iran controlling the transit of ships through the Strait of Hormuz.

Responding to a question from *The Hindu* on whether India had protested the exclusion of South Africa from the upcoming G-7 Summit in June, or from the G-20 summit in December, Mr. Jaiswal said the matter was for the hosts to decide. South Africa has participated as an outreach country at G-7 meets, and is a member of the G-20.

Is there a tacit agreement between govt., EC: O'Brien

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Two weeks after 193 parliamentarians from the Opposition submitted notices in both Houses seeking the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, the matter has not been acknowledged on the floor of Parliament, Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha leader Derek O'Brien said on Friday.

"Is there a tacit understanding between this government and the CEC?" Mr. O'Brien asked. With the Budget Session set to conclude on April 2, he said the government was making a "mockery of Parliament" by not acknowledging a legitimate parliamentary move.

SC highlights lapses in safeguarding survivors' identities

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court of India has warned of a "general indifference" among trial courts and the police towards what is statutorily a criminal offence, the public disclosure of the identity of survivors of sexual assault.

The court was compelled to intervene twice this week to remind law enforcement authorities and the judiciary that case records, affidavits, orders and judgments must not mention the personal details of survivors.

On Wednesday, a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant directed the Supreme Court Registry to erase or redact the name of the 3.8-year-old rape survivor, her parents and other identity marks from documents, including school records, annexed by the Gurugram Police Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner of Police with their affidavits.

On Tuesday, another Bench led by Justice Sanjay Karol found the nonchalant disclosure of the identity of a nine-year-old survivor in a rape case from Himachal Pradesh a "disturbing fact". The court questioned whether this indicated a systemic lapse in safeguards under Section 228A of the IPC (now Section 72 of the BNS), which criminalises disclosing a victim's identity with up to two years' rigorous imprisonment.

Defence proposals of ₹2.38 lakh cr. get approval

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Defence Acquisition Council, chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, on Friday granted Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for capital acquisition proposals worth about ₹2.38 lakh crore, significantly enhancing India's combat, surveillance and mobility capabilities across the armed forces.

For the Army, approvals include air defence tracked systems.

The Air Force received approvals for medium transport aircraft and the S-400 long range, surface-to-air missile system.

For the Coast Guard, approval was given for heavy duty air cushion vehicles.

India signs ₹858-cr. defence deals with Russian, U.S. firms

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

The Tunguska weapon system will enhance capabilities against aerial threats such as drones and cruise missiles. FILE PHOTO

The Ministry of Defence on Friday signed contracts worth ₹858 crore for the procurement of air defence systems for the Army and maintenance support for the Navy's reconnaissance fleet, reinforcing India's balanced defence partnerships with Russia and the United States.

A contract worth ₹445 crore was signed with Russian agency JSC Rosoboronexport for the procurement of the Tunguska Air Defence Missile System for the Army. The deal was inked in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh at Kartavya Bhavan. The system is expected to significantly enhance India's multi-layered air defence capabilities against aerial threats such as aircraft, drones and cruise missiles, while further strengthening the Indo-Russian strategic defence partnership.

In a parallel move, the Ministry signed a ₹413-crore contract with U.S. firm Boeing India Defense Private Limited for depot-level inspection of the Navy's P-8I Long-Range Maritime Reconnaissance Aircraft under the 'Buy Indian category with 100% Indigenous Content'.

The contract will enable in-country maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) of the P-8I fleet, enhancing operational readiness, in line with the government's Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India push. The agreements underline India's focus on strengthening combat capabilities.

ASSEMBLY POLLS

Owaisi to campaign for AIUDF in Assam

After announcing his support for Humayun Kabir's Aam Janata Unnayan Party in West Bengal, All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief Asaduddin Owaisi will campaign for the minority-based All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) in Assam.

This will be Mr. Owaisi's first election-related visit to the State, which is going to the polls in a single phase on April 9.

"He agreed to campaign for our party. We are organising at least eight campaign programmes during his visit to the State in the first week of April," Mohammed Badruddin Ajmal, the AIUDF chief, told *The Hindu* on Friday.

The AIUDF is contesting 30 of Assam's 126 Assembly seats, mostly in Muslim-dominated areas.

The AIMIM's outreach in Assam is seen as a way to consolidate minority votes in key seats. ANI

Mamata targets poll body over SIR list

On a day the Election Commission was scheduled to publish the second supplementary list of voters in connection with the special intensive revision exercise in West Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee lashed out at the body and the BJP for "not putting out in the public domain the full and final first supplementary list". Calling the non-availability of the list a "murder of democracy", Ms. Banerjee warned on Friday that "people will soon seek answers to such arbitrary exercise of power".

The first supplementary list of 'under adjudication' names was published on March 23 without stating the number of deletions and inclusions. Top sources in the EC have, however, claimed that around 40% of the 32 lakh voters scrutinised were removed from the rolls. PTI

> Voting for the BJP is not just a political choice, it is a commitment to safeguard civilisational identity and secure our children's future
>
> **SARBANANDA SONOWAL**
> Union Minister

Modi to address people of Assam via NaMo app

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with people of Assam through NaMo application on issues related to the coming Assembly election in the State. The Assam BJP, in a statement on Friday, said Mr. Modi will directly engage with party workers and common people on March 30 at 1 p.m. PTI

> We will continue the schemes and not withdraw, unlike BJP governments, which go back on their promises once the votes are over
>
> **ABHISHEK BANERJEE**
> Trinamool Congress leader

On the move: Agnimitra Paul, the BJP candidate from Asansol South constituency, campaigns on a bicycle. PTI

Candidates take offbeat route to connect with voters in Bengal

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

In West Bengal, candidates across party lines are engaging in quirky campaigns to connect with voters in their constituencies. From giving people a shave at a local barber shop to helping someone chop vegetables in a kitchen, candidates are doing it all to boost their prospects in the coming Assembly election.

These theatrical visuals from electoral campaigns have now gone viral on social media. Several social media influencers have also begun making parody versions of these viral videos.

LPG crisis in spotlight

Partha Hazari, the Trinamool Congress candidate from Pursura in Hooghly, entered a resident's kitchen and began making *rotis* on a clay oven. The women of the house said that their LPG cylinder had run out, taking a dig at the current LPG crisis, which the Trinamool has raised as a major election issue against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

On the other hand, the BJP's Asansol Dakshin candidate, Agnimitra Paul, fried fritters at a person's house. "Since our Chief Minister recommended that we fry fritters and tea to make money since there are no jobs in the State, this is what I am doing," Ms. Paul said.

Ms. Paul added that there was no industry in West Bengal, leading to a lack of jobs, and accused Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of wrongfully claiming that 21 lakh jobs had been created in the State.

Ranjan Dhara, fielded by the Trinamool Congress from Balagarh, stopped at a home and began cooking a meal.

The candidates of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) are not far behind in the trend.

Shuvojit Dasgupta, the CPI(M) candidate from Rajarhat-Gopalpur, was seen cutting banana flowers at a house.

In a parallel campaign, Anup Saha, the BJP MLA from Dubrajpur, entered a barber shop and began giving a shave to a customer seated in the barber's chair, drawing attention on social media.

'No restrictions on non-vegetarian food'

Deviating from the party's usual narrative of a vegetarian diet, the BJP candidate from Bidhannagar, Sharadwat Mukherjee, canvassed with a fish, attempting to signal that the saffron party would not impose restrictions on non-vegetarian food if it were voted to power in West Bengal.

Another BJP candidate, Gopal Chandra Saha, fielded from Malda, was seen working in the fields and collecting potatoes alongside farmers.

Mitali Bag of the Trinamool was seen trying her hand at cooking, farming, and knitting across multiple households in her Arambag constituency.

Connecting with the youth

To connect with young voters, Ramjiban Mandi, the Trinamool candidate from Keshiary, was seen running 12 km to reach a meeting addressed by party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee.

Another candidate, Pratibha Rani Maity from Narayangarh constituency, has been campaigning on her cycle, reaching voters inside villages.

The State will go to the polls in two phases on April 23 and 29, covering all 294 seats.

'T.N. Assembly election will not be a one-sided battle like 2024 LS poll'

Congress veteran says the State will see a close fight between two strong fronts but DMK will form the government; he says BJP will use every tactic, every device to influence and win the election; he says people of the State are open to coalition governance, and rules out any impact by actor Vijay

INTERVIEW

P. Chidambaram

D. Suresh Kumar
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Assembly election will be a close contest between two strong fronts and not a one-sided battle like the 2024 Lok Sabha election [when the DMK secured a landslide], according to Congress veteran and former Union Minister P. Chidambaram. He also disagreed with the DMK and the AIADMK's proposition that the people of T.N. will never agree to a coalition government. Edited excerpts:

In 2006, you hailed the DMK manifesto as the "hero of the elections". Can I say this time you are the hero of the DMK-Congress alliance, because, it looks, but for your intervention, the two parties could have drifted?

I am afraid no, my role is exaggerated. The Congress president asked me to meet the DMK president and Chief Minister [M.K. Stalin] and try to tie up the loose ends. I met him once. And then they agreed late in the evening.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi shared a brotherly bond with Mr. Stalin. What went wrong?

I would not attribute it to Mr. Rahul Gandhi. There were some strains in the early rounds of talks that could have been avoided. But that is all behind us.

Some of the older constituents of the (ruling DMK-led) Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA) are unhappy over seat allocation. Shouldn't Mr. Stalin have been less rigid with them?

There is always some dissatisfaction all round. In a marriage, the bride's side and the bridegroom's side will have always some dissatisfaction. As long as there is general satisfaction and some points of dissatisfaction, it means the alliance has been negotiated correctly. I think the addition of new parties to the alliance imposed limitations on the DMK and its leader. I saw statements by CPI, CPM... they have no after-event dissatisfaction.

Mr. Stalin is framing this election as a fight between Tamil Nadu and New Delhi. Do you endorse this?

That's entirely correct. You see, the puppet is the AIADMK, the puppeteer is the BJP. Unfortunately, in an Assembly election, instead of calling the shots, the AIADMK has ceded the ground, leadership, and the direction to the BJP.

Now, the BJP is determined to pass several Bills that have caused great dissatisfaction throughout the country – the IBC Amendment Bill, FCRA Amendment Bill, CAPF Amendment Bill. But the AIADMK doesn't say a word. Which means it is going along with everything the BJP is doing... the AIADMK seems to be under compulsion to toe the line.

SHIVARAJ S.

So, it is really a fight between the SPA and the BJP. You will find the main issues in this election are the ways in which BJP is imposing its Hindutva majoritarian agenda on the people.

But AIADMK leader Edappadi K. Palaniswami is asserting he is the boss...

He went to Delhi to meet the BJP leadership and seal the deal. He is in command of the AIADMK, but not in command of the election, strategy, and the issues that will be discussed in the election.

Will actor Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam be a potential disruptor leading to a hung Assembly? I am asking because in 2006, actor Vijayakant's entry had reduced the DMK's numbers to below 100.

See, Mr. Vijay is not Mr. MGR or Mr. Vijayakant. He is a popular actor but his fan club may not convert to voters. He will get votes, but will he get seats? The uniform opinion is Mr. Vijay may get about 7% to 8% votes. Some say it may go up to 12%. As campaign progresses, this has no way of increasing. In a three-cornered contest, you must have at least 37% [votes] to get seats. In a four-cornered contest, maybe 32%. In a direct contest, you must have at least 43% to 45% to win. Mr. Vijay's party is well below the threshold.

Mr. Stalin and Mr. Palaniswami have ruled out sharing power with allies. Is this right?

The DMK and the AIADMK have reiterated their known positions, so have other parties, which say "we would like sharing of power".

Their argument is that people of Tamil Nadu will not accept a coalition agreement.

I don't agree with the broad proposition that the people of T.N. will never agree to a coalition government. If it becomes necessary, they will accept the reality.

The Opposition's main accusation against the DMK government is that law and order has deteriorated, women safety is a big concern, and availability of drugs is on the rise...

This has some element of truth. But the drug problem, sexual violence, and gender violence is all over India. But whichever government is formed in T.N., it must control the drug menace, sensitise young men and boys that gender violence is the worst kind of violence, and sensitise police and train them to be more effective.

How would you rate Mr. Stalin's administration?

Going by economic metrics, we are the fastest growing State. Second, there is a bumper crop, which means they have paid attention to agriculture, irrigation, water, fertilizer, electricity. Third, we have massive outside external investment.

Welfare and direct cash transfers are dominating manifestos. As a former Union Finance Minister, don't you think these are fiscally imprudent against rising debt?

The debt burden is exaggerated. If GDP and GSDP increase and revenues increase, your State's own income increases and you are able to finance the debt, that's okay. You must look at the fiscal deficit as a proportion of the GSDP. T.N. compares favourably with every other State.

I believe in universal basic income (UBI). Free bus travel has brought large externalities. Economists will know that a social benefit, which has economic external externalities, is good. Free breakfast scheme too is part of UBI... I think it's manageable, viable.

What's your prediction for this election?

It will be a close election because parties are arrayed in two strong fronts. The BJP's entry under Mr. Modi [Prime Minister] and Mr. Shah [Home Minister] has injected a certain element, which I can't describe openly. But they will use every device, every tactic to win the election, to influence the election. It will be a close battle. I have warned my party men. It will not be a completely one-sided battle like the 2024 parliamentary action. But the DMK will form the government.

(Full interview at newsth.live/PC)

Script change: the rise of actor-politicians in Kerala

S.R. Praveen
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Back in 1987, Malayalam superstar Prem Nazir took the plunge into politics, after some level of persuasion from the Congress leadership. The fact that two other south Indian States were ruled by film stars, MGR in Tamil Nadu and NTR in Andhra Pradesh, at that point of time probably made the Congress try out a similar experiment in Kerala. However, Nazir did not contest, but took time out from his shooting schedule to campaign for the Congress across the State.

Perhaps indicating what Keralites back then thought about celebrities intervening in politics, the Congress failed to win that election as the Left Democratic Front (LDF) came to power. It used to be even proudly claimed by many that the glitz and glamour of the film world will not work with the politically aware populace of Kerala.

Even the stellar record of actor and current Transport Minister K.B. Ganesh Kumar of the Kerala Congress (B) , who has not lost from Pathanapuram since 2001, cannot be explained completely by his celebrityhood. He inherited the political legacy of his father R. Balakrishna Pillai, a former MP and Minister.

ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR

Since 2010s, various political fronts began banking on the popularity of stars to win difficult contests

Shift in 2010s

The picture began to change in the 2010s, when various political fronts began banking on the popularity of stars to win difficult contests. In 2014, actor Innocent, one of the most popular comedians in Malayalam cinema, won from the Chalakudy Lok Sabha constituency. Although he could not repeat the win, his victory changed several assumptions about the acceptance of actors in the electoral arena.

The years since then have seen a few more actors making their mark, be it actor M. Mukesh, who has won on LDF ticket from the Kollam Assembly constituency in 2016 and 2021 or actor Suresh Gopi, who won from Thrissur in 2024 to give the BJP its first Lok Sabha constituency win in Kerala. Gopi's win in the constituency was partly attributed to his image as an actor, as many neutral voters appeared to have chosen him over other seasoned politicians.

But, even in this changed scenario, it was not smooth sailing for every actor. Actors such as Jagadeesh (Congress), Bheeman Raghu (BJP), Dharmajan (Congress) and G. Krishna Kumar (BJP) have all tasted defeat in elections in the past decade.

Unlike in the previous years, the two superstars, Mammootty and Mohanlal, are in the thick of political conversations in the run-up to the Assembly election this time.

Mammootty found himself at the centre of a controversy following his visit in March to the township built by the LDF government for families displaced by the Mundakkai-Chooralmala landslides in 2024. A video of his interaction with a CPI(M) district secretary, asking him not to tail him, as it could lead the public to interpret his visit as being done at the party's behest, went viral.

Both actors have appeared in several promotional videos of the State government.

Last month, Mohanlal held an hour-long television interview with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. Two weeks later, the actor also appeared in the Union government's citizen engagement platform and hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a "visionary leader".

In this election

Other than Ganesh Kumar and Ramesh Pisharody, the candidate list this year has a host of actors, including Sudheer Karamana, whom the LDF fielded from Thiruvananthapuram constituency.

Twenty20, a party which is part of the National Democratic Alliance, also fielded some lesser known actors and television personalities in key constituencies.

The increasing number of actors into the electoral arena, without grassroot-level political experience, has kicked up a debate on whether parties resorting to such shortcuts in the quest for victory bodes well in the long term.

EC suspends police officer following Bengal clashes

Press Trust of India
KOLKATA

In a first this election season in West Bengal, the Election Commission (EC) on Friday ordered the suspension of Basanti Police Station Inspector-in-Charge Avijit Paul for allegedly failing to tackle BJP-Trinamool Congress clashes on March 26, according to a notice issued by the poll panel.

The EC described it as "serious negligence and dereliction of duty" on the part of the officer.

Several people, including police personnel, were injured in the clash at Basanti Bazar under Baruipur Police district, and nine people have been arrested.

"It has been observed that the officer failed to make adequate police arrangements despite having prior information regarding a public programme of two political parties," the notice said. The EC also pulled up the officer for not deploying central forces despite their availability.

INBRIEF

Eight killed in U.P. as pickup truck rams parked vehicle

Eight people were killed on Friday when a pickup truck carrying devotees rammed a stationary trailer truck parked on the side of the National Highway in Kaushambi district of Uttar Pradesh. The pickup truck, carrying 12 devotees, was travelling from Prayagraj to Fatehpur. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief over the deaths and directed district officials to expedite relief measures.

Five dead as speeding car hits auto-rickshaw in Gwalior

Five persons, were killed after the auto-rickshaw they were travelling in was hit by a speeding car in Gwalior district of Madhya Pradesh, the police said on Friday. The incident took place around 3 a.m. in Thatipur town of Gwalior. The auto-rickshaw was carrying nine members of the same family. Murar city Superintendent of Police Atul Soni said two people had been arrested and cases lodged against them.

Signs, gestures substantive evidence: Chhattisgarh HC

The Chhattisgarh High Court has said that testimony through signs and gestures shall be treated as substantive oral evidence, while dismissing the appeal of a man convicted of raping a woman with speech and hearing disabilities in 2020. "The defence contention that the victim, being deaf and dumb, is not a competent witness is liable to be rejected," a Bench of Chief Justice Ramesh Sinha and Justice Ravindra Kumar Agrawal said in a recent order.

'Trade deal with India not far-off, but still has gaps'

U.S. official says one of the gaps in the discussions is around pulses, with India seeking to safeguard the market for this agricultural commodity and the U.S. wanting greater access to it

Sriram Lakshman
WASHINGTON DC

Prime Minister Narendra Modi walks along with U.S. President Donald Trump at the White House, in this file photo.

The U.S. and India are not "far off" from finalising an interim trade deal, but need to bridge some negotiating gaps, such as over discussions on pulses and the staging of tariff reductions, according to a U.S. official. "We're not that far off from finalising the interim trade deal, but some gaps remain," the official told *The Hindu* in recent days.

Officials in Washington are working out the nitty-gritty of trade agreements following the U.S. Supreme Court's February 20 ruling that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), which was the basis for President Donald Trump's 'reciprocal tariffs', was unlawfully applied. The administration is now working towards re-establishing the reciprocal tariffs using other legislative tools, including 'Special' 301 trade investigations conducted by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR).

Deal 'gaps'

One of the gaps in India-U.S. discussions, as per the U.S. official, is around pulses, with India seeking to safeguard the market for this agricultural commodity and the U.S. wanting greater access to it. Politically, agriculture is a deeply sensitive issue for both countries, with the administration in DC and government in New Delhi not singing from the same song sheet – or, more literally, 'fact sheet'.

Last month, the White House put out a 'fact sheet' – including the term "certain pulses" on a list of items that, it claimed, India would cut tariffs on. This and other discrepancies with the joint statement issued by Washington and New Delhi had created a political furore in India. The White House quietly reissued the 'fact sheet'– a political statement, rather than a statement of fact – this time omitting the reference to pulses and correcting certain other discrepancies.

However, the U.S. side still appears to be pushing for market access on pulses. Additionally, *The Hindu* has learned that Washington is seeking reduced staging (i.e., the speeding up of a phased reduction in tariffs) and this is currently one of the gaps in negotiating positions and is under discussion.

Special 301 probes

Conversations *The Hindu* has had in recent days suggest that right now, however, trade officials in Washington are not focused on closing the gaps in trade deals but are busy conducting Special 301 investigations launched in March against tens of countries, including India, ostensibly for excess capacity in manufacturing and forced labour.

While the U.S. did sign a trade deal since the latest set of 301s was launched, this was with Ecuador, a country with an economy at least 30 times smaller than India and whose bilateral trade with the U.S. is a fraction of U.S.-India bilateral trade. These probes – which are conducted annually on different countries – will enable the imposition of tariffs on top of the universal tariff rate of 10%, imposed on February 24 using Section 122 of the U.S.'s Trade Act. Section 122 tariffs, applied temporarily when there is a balance of payments issue, can be applied for no more than 150 days and cannot exceed 15% as per law.

Mr. Trump had said in February that he would increase the universal 10% rate to 15%. However, the officials in DC appeared unsure whether it would happen at all.

A question to the White House on the timing of any such hike went unanswered. The USTR also did not provide information on possible rate hike, when approached by *The Hindu*.

Hiking this universal tariff to 15% would also complicate Washington's agreements with countries that had reciprocal tariffs of less than 15%.

Among the contentious topics is trade in e-commerce, where Indian and American positions are not aligned. India has for long wanted an end to the moratorium on tariffs on various forms of e-commerce (software downloads, digital music, etc.) while the U.S. would like to make this permanent.

Amid conflict, India sends out invites for key BRICS meetings

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

India is set to host the BRICS Foreign Ministers' meet in May.

Hoping to forge an elusive consensus over the war in West Asia, New Delhi is going ahead with planning key meetings of BRICS countries this year in India, and has sent out invitations for the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting to be held in May and the 18th BRICS Summit in September.

According to officials and diplomats, the invitations to the 10-nation grouping that also includes Iran and the United Arab Emirates went out in mid-March. Both countries have rebuffed several attempts by India – the current Chair of BRICS – for a joint statement. Officials said it is unclear whether they will attend the meeting together, but "as of now" the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting is due to be held in-person in mid-May. The summit, which could bring Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping and leaders from Brazil, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran and the UAE together in Delhi, is expected to be held on September 9-10.

"One of the key events on the political track, in addition to the traditional leaders' meeting [in September], will be the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting, scheduled for May," Russian government spokesperson Maria Zakharova told journalists in Moscow this week. "This will be a good opportunity for a thorough discussion of current issues on the international agenda, the role of BRICS in the world, and opportunities for joint action," she said, responding to questions about how the grouping would tackle the war in West Asia.

Diplomats have openly acknowledged difficulties in forging a statement that is agreeable to both Tehran and Abu Dhabi. "We have an ongoing conversation with BRICS members on the conflict in West Asia," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at a media briefing on Friday. "As you're aware, some of the BRICS members are also involved directly in the conflict... Because we have differing opinions, it has been difficult for us to forge a consensus on this particular conflict."

In June 2025, the BRICS then chaired by Brazil had managed to issue a strong statement when the U.S. and Israel jointly struck a number of Iranian nuclear sites, condemning the military strikes against Iran.

Court extends custody of 7 foreigners held by NIA

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Friday extended the remand of seven foreign nationals by 10 days who are in the custody of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) over suspected links to ethnic armed groups in Myanmar. The agency had sought a 15-day custody for their interrogation.

Special judge Prashant Sharma, who conducted the proceedings at the NIA headquarters citing the sensitive nature of the investigation, directed the accused be produced before the court on April 6.

Pilots told not to come under 'VIP pressure' during election season

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

"Say no to VIP pressure", the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said in a new order issued on Friday, revising norms for flying dignitaries and election operations, which also include enhanced weather safeguards.

The order was issued under Section 4 of the Bharatiya Vayuyan Adhiniyam, 2024, and replaces two advisory circulars on VIP flying issued in 2014 and 2021.

A key provision requires charter companies to mandatorily brief VIP passengers that operational decisions must remain free from "external pressure", especially on weather, visibility and sunset operations, with pilots frequently reporting implicit pressure to fly despite constraints.

For the first time, the norms lay down eligibility criteria for co-pilots: a minimum of 500 hours of total flying experience and 100 hours on type for aircraft, and 300 hours total with 50 hours on type for helicopter co-pilots. The experience requirements for helicopter Pilot-in-Command remain unchanged.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister expected to visit India next month in reset of bilateral relations

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

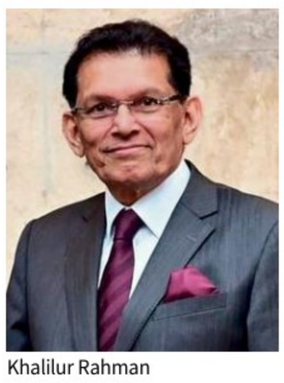
Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman is expected to visit India in the first week of April, diplomatic sources have confirmed.

The visit will be the first high-level outreach from Bangladesh since Prime Minister Tarique Rahman came to power after leading the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) to a landslide victory in the February 12 election. The trip is expected to restart bilateral ties that had turned cold during the 15-month long tenure of the interim government.

Mr. Khalilur Rahman is expected to hold bilateral meetings in New Delhi and then proceed to Mauritius, where he will attend the Indian Ocean Conference being organised by the Government of Mauritius.

Energy security

The visit is likely to be dominated by Bangladesh's energy scenario that has become serious because of the ongoing war in West Asia and the resultant crisis in the global energy market. India has supplied a consignment of high-speed diesel to Bangladesh on March 10 with sources indicating that Bangladesh has urgent requirement for diesel and other petroleum products as the country has been rationing fuel to deal with the crisis.



Khalilur Rahman

The two sides are also expected to pick up the issue of renewal of the Ganga Waters Treaty, which will turn 30 in December this year.

Mr. Khalilur Rahman was the National Security Adviser of the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus and had visited India in November 2025, when he had met NSA Ajit Doval in the national capital.

Both the countries had been exchanging comments in keeping with the spirit of mutual understanding.

On March 25 marking the anniversary of the infamous Operation Searchlight of 1971 by Pakistan military that killed millions of citizens of Bangladesh, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman had paid tribute to the victims of the Pakistani military's atrocities.

The External Affairs Ministry on Friday said that the 1971 Operation Searchlight and the continued violence of that year, led to the "murder of millions of innocent Bangladeshi people and mass sexual crimes against women".

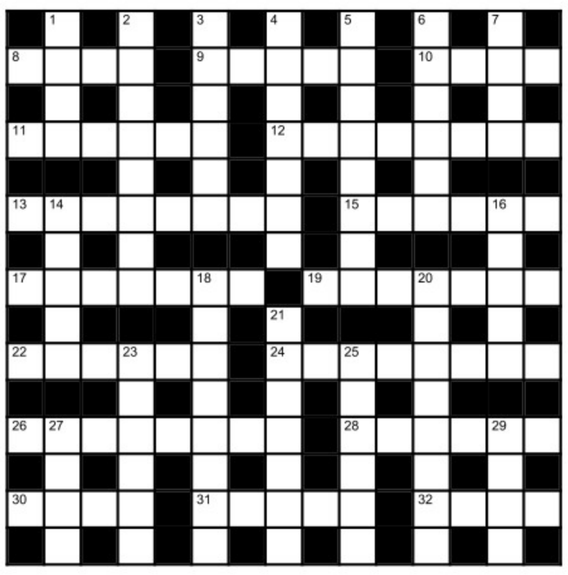
"These atrocities shook the conscience of the world. Pakistan, however, remains in denial to this very day of its crimes. We support Bangladesh in its desire for justice," Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said adding that "India supports Bangladesh's desire for justice".

TH CROSSWORD + 14753

(set by Incognito)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

8 Asian national found in Hiawatha Island (4)
9 List out letters in "Magical influence" (5)
10 Amounts received in charity is mostly small change (4)
11 Endless magic performed by saint results in taint (6)
12 That lady with European finished first at this place (4,4)
13 A cadet giving shelter to military officer after releasing model gets award (8)
15 Excitedly go over trench (6)
17 Sharpen in front of animal enclosure. It's the best policy! (7)
19 Sleeping equipment at end of aisle in ship for writers (7)
22 At first, unusually large fuse can be of utility (6)
24 Bury Virginia with initial lover in the meantime (8)
26 Wild chatter about Republican becoming governor (8)
28 Require the French pointer (6)
30 Heard, "Take a look. It's a kind of dog, in short" (4)
31 Pertaining to measure of plain surface covered in rare album (5)
32 Land in the middle of the sea, for example (4)

Down

1 Note from Pollachi, Tamil Nadu (4)
2 Mistakenly one "Tring" sound emanating from phone (8)
3 Territorial Army captures bird for ethnic group from South Africa (6)
4 Get back and put the lid on again (7)
5 This type of reaction may translate to ill grace (8)
6 Potash transliterated in an Indo-European language (6)
7 Ruler can be seen in the mirror (4)
14 Chinese operations producing items of food (5)
16 Musical instrument in possession of Naveen Andrews (5)
18 Turnpike made from tall door (4,4)
20 Middle Easterners showing real problem in river (8)
21 Her gift? Probably a type of plane... (7)
23 One-time student? (6)
25 Net rejected by boxer in AP town (6)
27 Part of seventeen? That's not odd... (4)
29 Small Yankee gets flower (4)

SUDOKU

	4						6	
	3	8						5
2	9			8	5			
1				7		9	4	
			1		2			
	7	5		4				1
			4	3			7	6
8						3	5	
	1						8	

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

O	E		I		A		B		C		C		R	
H	O	N	E	S	T	Y		A	C	O	L	Y	T	E
M		I		I		E		R		R		N		C
A	U	G	U	S	T	A		O	R	A	T	O	R	Y
G		M				Y		N		N		S		C
E	X	A	N	T	H	E	M	A		G	R	U	E	L
				U				G		L		R		E
D	U	S	T	B	I	N		E	N	A	M	E	L	S
E		C		T		A				I				
S	T	A	S	H		R	A	V	I	S	H	I	N	G
K		R		U		G		A				C		A
T	R	I	U	M	P	H		L	A	G	G	A	R	D
O		E		P		I		I		U		R		G
P	A	S	S	E	U	L		S	T	A	T	U	T	E
S		T		R		E		E		M		S		T

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	9	1	2	7	5	4	6	8
2	8	5	4	6	9	3	7	1
7	4	6	1	8	3	9	5	2
8	3	7	5	1	6	2	4	9
5	1	9	7	4	2	6	8	3
6	2	4	9	3	8	7	1	5
9	7	3	8	5	4	1	2	6
1	6	8	3	2	7	5	9	4
4	5	2	6	9	1	8	3	7

FAITH

Vallalar's message

Smt. Desa Mangayarkarasi highlighted the spiritual greatness of the 19th-century Tamil saint Ramalinga Swamigal in a discourse. He is widely revered as Vallalar, meaning "the great giver". Unlike ancient rulers such as Pari, who were celebrated for their generosity in donating material wealth such as gold and land, Vallalar is honoured for bestowing *arul* – divine grace. This form of giving is considered far superior. It neither diminishes with sharing nor perishes over time. It is an eternal gift that uplifts the soul rather than merely satisfying temporary worldly needs.

The sacred hymnal *Thiruvarutpa*, composed by Vallalar, serves as a profound guide to spiritual transformation through devotion. It teaches that the first step on the spiritual path is to deeply reflect on the insignificance of the individual self. This reflection compares the self to the Divine's infinite, boundless nature. Such contemplation dissolves the ego and fosters humility. As this awareness deepens, it evolves into an intense emotional connection with the Divine. The devotee's heart melts in pure devotion.

Vallalar's teachings, particularly in the Gnana Sariya section, are not merely philosophical concepts but rather a practical, experiential spiritual path. He emphasises that worldly pleasures, such as the enjoyment derived from food and sensory experiences, are temporary and impermanent (*anithya*). Seekers are encouraged to transcend these fleeting pleasures. Instead, they should pursue the eternal bliss of divine grace. By cultivating devotion, humility, and detachment, one can progress toward true spiritual fulfilment. Ultimately, this leads to union with the Divine.

INBRIEF

Housing sales in Jan.-March dip 7% due to W. Asia conflict

Housing sales rose 9% annually to over 1.01 lakh units in January-March across top-seven cities on low-base effect but fell 7% from the previous quarter amid global economic uncertainties due to the West Asia conflict, according to Anarock. Sales increased to 1,01,675 units during the current quarter from 93,280 units in the year-ago period. Real estate consultant Anarock said the sales in value terms grew 6% to ₹1.51 lakh crore during the January-March period from ₹1.42 lakh crore in the corresponding period of the preceding year. Anarock, however, pointed out that housing sales fell 7% in volume terms and 6% value wise from the previous quarter because of West Asia conflict. In the fourth quarter of the last calendar year, 1,08,970 units were sold for ₹1.60 lakh crore. PTI

Bill proposes grace period after expiry of driving licence

The government has proposed to amend Motor Vehicle Act to allow a 30-day grace period after the expiry of a driving licence, during which it will continue to remain valid. This is part of the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026 which was introduced by Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Jitin Prasada in the Lok Sabha on Friday. It proposes to amend 79 central acts administered by 23 ministries. A total of 784 provisions are being proposed to be amended, of which, 717 provisions are being de-criminalised to foster ease of doing business, and 67 provisions proposed to be amended to facilitate ease of living.

According to the spokesperson of the commerce and industry ministry, 20 amendments are proposed under the Motor Vehicle Act, with an aim to provide relaxation for some compliances under the Motor Vehicle law and resolve legal ambiguities. PTI

Commercial LPG limit raised to 70% of pre-crisis levels

Priority to be given to process industries or those requiring LPG for specialised heating purposes that cannot be substituted by natural gas

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Offering further respite to commercial entities seeking supplies of liquified petroleum gas (LPG), the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) on Friday called for increased allocation of the hydrocarbon gas to States and Union Territories (UTs) by another 20%, taking the total allocation of commercial LPG to 70% of the pre-crisis levels.

The latest additional allocation seeks to accord priority to sectors where piped natural gas may not serve as an alternative.

This includes labour-intensive and essential sectors which support other sectors such as steel, automobile, textile, dye, chemicals, and plastics.

"Among these, priority shall be given to process industries or those requiring LPG for specialised heating purposes that cannot be substituted by natural gas," the government's letter emphasised.

Earlier, the union steel ministry had sought the petroleum ministry's intervention to ensure plants are not affected by LPG shortage.

Reiterating PNG push

The latest allocation is also inclusive of the 10% additional allocation announced earlier in March, which was conditioned on States and UTs helping spur the uptake of piped gas in their jurisdictions.

In its latest communication to States and UTs, the ministry reiterated that in order to receive the latest additional quantum of 20%, entities must apply with city gas distributors for transition to piped gas.

It, however, grants an exemption to industries where LPG is used in its regular process, and for specialised purposes where a transition to natural gas is not possible.

"If industries specified in paragraph 1 of this letter [that is, steel, automobile, textile, dye, chemicals, and plastics] where LPG is used in the process and for special purposes which cannot be substituted by natural gas, such requirement would stand waived," the communication read.

On Thursday, the government refuted assertions about the push for piped gas being premised on pressure on LPG.

"The claim that PNG is being pushed because LPG is running out is misinformation. LPG supply is secure. PNG is simply a better, more affordable and highly convenient fuel for India's households," the government said.

Dire need: Labour-intensive and essential sectors would be accorded priority in terms of the additional allocation. FILE PHOTO

> The claim that PNG is being pushed because LPG is running out is misinformation. LPG supply is secure

Indices slip 2% as oil rebounds to $111/bbl

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

Nifty50 and Sensex shed 2.09% and 2.25% to close at 22,819.60 and 73,583.22 respectively

Benchmark indices declined more than 2% after crude oil bounced back to $111 a barrel as hopes of de-escalation between the U.S. and Iran faded on Friday.

Nifty50 and Sensex shed 2.09% and 2.25% to close at 22,819.60 and 73,583.22 respectively, paring small gains that were made in the past two sessions.

All 21 Nifty sectoral indices declined, with Nifty Auto dipping 2.8%. Foreign Institutional Investors (FII) withdrew ₹1,565.63 crore in equity, adding to the record monthly outflow.

Global equities researchers have downgraded the outlook for Nifty. Goldman Sachs Research has downgraded Indian equities' outlook for the next 12 months to 25,900 points from its earlier 29,300 points.

"The record FII outflows and the still-high oil prices pushed the foreign exchange rate to another all time low of ₹94 a dollar and is expected to depreciate further as long as energy flows remain constrained," said Anindya Banerjee, Head of Currency and Commodities Research at Kotak Securities.

Coal India to set up 8 coking coal washeries at ₹3,300 crore

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Seeking to improve the quality of coking coal, State-owned miner Coal India Ltd. (CIL) informed it would be setting up eight new coking coal washeries, with a combined washing capacity of 21.5 million tonnes a year, at an estimated capital outlay of ₹3,300 crore.

Of the eight, five would be set up by the Jharkhand-headquartered Central Coalfields Ltd. These would have a cumulative capacity of 14.5 million tonnes a year. The remaining, to be with Bharat Coking Coal, would account for a cumulative capacity of 7 million tonnes a year.

CIL expects to make the eight washeries operational by FY30.

Additionally, miner would also be spending ₹300 crore in renovation and modernisation of its existing coking coal washeries. At present, CIL operates 10 such washeries that account for a cumulative capacity of 18.35 million tonnes a year.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	FRIDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	73,583	-2.25
US Dollar	94.70	-0.78
Gold	1,47,800	-1.26
Brent oil	111.79	—

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	1823.00	-63.60
Adani Ports	1337.80	-38.10
Apollo Hosp	7549.00	-31.50
Asian Paints	2207.40	-62.80
Axis Bank	1205.20	-16.90
Bajaj Auto	8901.00	-147.50
Bajaj Finserv	1694.70	-51.50
Bajaj Finance	843.80	-38.95
Bharat Elec	404.75	-8.70
Bharti Airtel	1843.90	9.00
Cipla	1242.30	-2.10
Coal India	445.05	1.35
Dr Reddys Lab	1281.70	-19.00
Eicher Motors	6811.50	-181.00
Eternal Ltd.	233.17	-9.01
Grasim Ind	2628.20	-19.60
HCL Tech	1364.40	-16.90
HDFC Bank	756.20	-26.10
HDFC Life	610.20	-2.70
Hindalco	866.70	-1.95
Hind Unilever	2074.40	-60.40
ICICI Bank	1233.80	-25.90
IntGlobeAvi	4099.50	-195.20
Infosys	1269.70	-9.40
ITC	294.70	-1.00
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	232.55	-4.80
JSW Steel	1130.30	-25.70
Kotak Bank	366.15	-4.95
L&T	3564.10	-85.20
M&M	3041.30	-86.80
Maruti Suzuki	12389.00	-322.00
Max Healthcare	975.10	-13.10
NestleIndia	1193.20	-10.90
NTPC	375.65	-2.75
ONGC	281.95	11.75
PowerGrid Corp	295.50	0.50
Reliance Ind	1348.10	-65.00
SBI Life	1837.60	-14.20
State Bank	1019.50	-41.10
Shriram Finance Ltd.	903.80	-52.20
Sun Pharma	1793.60	-1.80
TataConsumerProduct	1048.50	-7.60
Tata Steel	193.22	-3.43
TCS	2389.80	12.40
Tech Mahindra	1391.60	-16.90
Titan	3981.50	-57.80
Tata Motors PV	303.20	-14.75
Trent Ltd.	3399.60	-79.30
UltraTech Cement	11049.00	-155.00
Wipro	191.60	2.55

Automakers told to optimise output

India has asked automakers and parts suppliers to tighten production schedules to conserve fuel amid fears of shortages caused by disrupted oil and gas imports from the Gulf due to the Iran war, a government memo seen by *Reuters* shows.

Indian coffee exports hit due to U.S.-Iran war; shipments stranded at sea

Mini Tejaswi
BENGALURU

Losing flavour: A worker picks ripe coffee cherries at a coffee estate in Chikkamagaluru district of Karnataka. PTI

Some 300 containers (each carrying 20 tonne) of India's coffee exports to West Asian markets are now stranded at ports or slowly moving via the Strait of Hormuz, throwing coffee exporters into a sea of uncertainty and cost escalations as the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran constrained passage through the Strait of Hormuz.

Ramesh Rajah, president, the Coffee Exporters Association of India (AICEA) told *The Hindu* the crisis badly hit Indian coffee exports to the region and several European destinations, the largest importers of Indian coffee with a share of 60%, as most shipments en route to Jebel Ali Port in Dubai are either delayed, rerouted or getting offloaded in safe-labelled ports far away from destinations or returning to Mundra Port in Gujarat, Nhava Sheva Port in Mumbai, New Mangalore Port or Kochi Port.

He said some of the containers were declared as 'end of voyage' and offloaded at Khor Fakkan in UAE, Sohar or Salalah in Oman or Jeddah, far away from buyer destinations.

Even midway shipping lines won't take responsibility for the consignments. Then they become exporters' sole responsibility, first to locate the containers (port destinations keep changing depending on the war situation), hire trucks and deliver the shipments to buyers, paying a trucking cost of some $3,000 to $4,000 all from India. It also attracts additional freight cost of $3,000 such as war surcharge and insurance cost.

'Complete confusion'

"This situation has thrown Indian coffee exporters into complete confusion. Under the scenario, per container delivery cost rose by $5,000 to $6,000 in addition to the $800 to $1,000 freight costs per container. Recalling the consignments to India is also a costly affair and involves different kinds of paperwork, procedures and fee."

Salman Baseer, chairman, Karnataka Planters Association (KPA), a body accounting for over 70% of the country's coffee output, said the U.S.-Iran conflict and disruptions in shipping routes significantly impacted coffee exports, escalated freight and landing charges as logistics costs and insurance cost increased and dampened the sentiments of coffee markets in India.

"Coffee containers are stranded or slowly moving on various ships. This has led to huge inventory delays, price volatility, market uncertainty, affecting producers and global buyers alike," he said.

Also, all coffee shipments for West Asia were supposed to have reached before Ramzan. But they were still stranded on seas and therefore, customers need not accept the consignments paying huge additional landing cost.

Mr. Rajah of AICEA said, the exporters body had already reached out to the Coffee Board of India and the board in turn informed the Ministry of Commerce. But the Ministry is yet to make any statement.

Most coffee contracts with global buyers would be honoured even at huge extra cost for exporters and buyers, however, new contracts may not happen until per container charges, currently in the $4,000 range, are rationalised.

Indian coffee exports to the U.S and Europe got costlier by 50% to 60% as per the revised freight levies with transit time also getting longer by 10 plus days.

Meanwhile, exports to Japan and Australia were unaffected. India's inability to reach coffee consignments to global markets in time has thrown open more opportunities for Uganda, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Brazil and other South African and Central American coffee producers.

Adani Ports sets up Ports of Refuge for maritime safety

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd. (APSEZ), which handles almost 27% of India's port cargo volumes, said it operationalised India's first Port of Refuge (PoR), addressing a long-standing gap in maritime emergency infrastructure and creating a structured mechanism to handle maritime emergencies and vessels in distress.

A PoR, as per the International Maritime Organization, is a designated location where ships can seek shelter to stabilise conditions, protect life and limit environmental damage.

The initiative is backed by a tripartite memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SMIT Salvage, the salvage and emergency response division of Royal Boskalis Westminster N.V. (Boskalis) and the Maritime Emergency Response Centre (MERC). The capability will support vessels insured under the International Group of Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Clubs.

Two sites

APSEZ said it will designate two sites as PoR: Dighi Port [near Mumbai] on the west coast, supporting traffic across Arabian Sea and routes to Persian Gulf and Gopalpur Port [in Odisha] on the east coast, serving vessels in the Bay of Bengal and routes towards the Malacca Strait. They will provide salvage and wreck removal, firefighting, pollution containment and emergency coordination via specialised equipment and response teams.

Government of Karnataka
RURAL DRINKING WATER SUPPLY & SANITAION DEPARTEMENT, DIVISION, CHITRADURGA .
Phone No.: 08194-234488 e-mail: eerdwsd.chd@gmail.com
Tender Notification No: EE/RDWS&SD/CTA//Tender/ 1855 /2025-26/ Dt: 27.03.2026

Tender Notification
Through e-procurement

Tender has been invited for the following work in Two cover system through kppp-procurement. Eligible tenders may obtain the details and tender documents and submitted the filled tender online through website view.http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Chitradurga and Hiriyur Taluks Total 01 Works, Rs. 63.76 Lakhs Last Date for Receipt of Bids Dt: 13.04.2026, Technical Bid Opening 15.04.2026 and Financial Bid Opening 16.05.2026 For Further details Office of Executive Engineer and also through e-port web site http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/805/2025-26 RDWS&S Division, Chitradurga

ಉಪ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ,
ಶ್ರೀ ಚಾಮರಾಜೇಂದ್ರ ಮೃಗಾಲಯ, ಮೈಸೂರು.
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಎಂವೈಜೆಡ್/ಟೆಂಡರ್/2025–26 ದಿ.24.03.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

(ಇ ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ)

ಈ ಕಛೇರಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಹರಾಜು ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ 1) Indent No.ZAK/2025-26/AUCTION33 Dt.24.03.2026ರ ಅನ್ವಯ (FDR) Fixed Deposit Receipt ಅನ್ನು ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಕೃತ ಬಾಂಕ್‌ನಿಂದ ಬಡ್ಡಿ ದರವನ್ನು ಪಡೆದು ಸ್ಥಿರ ಠೇವಣಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಇರಿಸಲು ಕರೆಯುವ ಇ–ಹರಾಜು ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ರನ್ವಯ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕವನ್ನು ಹಾಗೂ ಇತರೆ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ (https://kppp. karnataka.gov.in) ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಉಪ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು, ಶ್ರೀ ಚಾಮರಾಜೇಂದ್ರ ಮೃಗಾಲಯ, ಮೈಸೂರು
DIPR/DDMYS/1887/KSMCA/1071/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION (ISRO)
ISRO-TELEMETRY TRACKING & COMMAND NETWORK (ISTRAC)
(CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP)
Plot No.12&13, 3rd Main, 2nd Phase, Peenya Industrial Estate, Bengaluru-58. Ph: 080-28094185, 4144, 4541, Fax: 080-28094180

CORRIGENDUM-I DT: 26.03.2026

On behalf of President of India, **item rate E-tender** is invited from Contractors of appropriate class for following works.

NIT No.	**ISTRAC/CMG/E/CON/E-Tender-114/ 2025-2026 dated: 26.02.2026**
Name of work	**Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 10kWP (minimum capacity) to 50kWP (maximum capacity) capacity (totalling to 380 kWP) rooftop Solar Power Plant at various location of ISTRAC, ISRO. (2nd Call)**
Estimated Cost put to tender	**Rs. 230.00 Lakhs**
Tender Document details	**E-Tender**
Period of Completion	**Six (06) months**
Period during which tender documents can be downloaded	From 16.00 hrs. on 27.02.2026 to 21.03.2026 till 16.00 hrs. **Extended up to 04.04.2026 up to 16.00 Hrs.**
Bid clarifications	From 11.00 hrs. on 28.02.2026 to 22.03.2026 till 16.00 hrs. **Extended up to 05.04.2026 up to 16.00 Hrs.**
Last date of reply to Bid clarification	23.03.2026 up to 16.00 hrs. **Extended up to 06.04.2026 up to 16.00 Hrs.**
Last date & time for receipt of tenders	24.03.2026 up to 16.00 hrs. **Extended up to 07.04.2026 up to 16.00 Hrs.**
Due date & time of opening of tenders	26.03.2026 after 11.00 hrs. **Extended up to 09.04.2026 after 11.00 Hrs.**
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	**Rs. 4,60,000.00**

For eligibility criteria and other details, interested tenderers may please refer the detailed bilingual (Hindi-English) Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) on the website: **https://isro.gov.in/Tenders.html** and tender fee view at **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO**

Sd/- Group Head-CMG

ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಹೂಟಗಳ್ಳಿ
ರೋಟರಿ ಶಾಲೆ ಹತ್ತಿರ, ಕೆ.ಪಿಚ್.ಬಿ.ಕಾಲೋನಿ, ಹೂಟಗಳ್ಳಿ, ಮೈಸೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ-570018
ಸಹಾಯವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : 0821–2001737, E-Mail: ka.hootagalli.cmc@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ನಸಹೂ/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ/ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ/ಪ.ಆರ್–04/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 27.03.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಹೂಟಗಳ್ಳಿ ನಗರಸಭೆ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ನಗರಸಭಾ ನಿಧಿಯಡಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು **ಕೆ.ಟಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಕಾಯ್ದೆ 2000ರ** ಪ್ರಕಾರ **KW–02 Standard Bid Documents** ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ **KPP** ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದ್ದು. ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಅರ್ಹ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತ ಸಿವಿಲ್ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ಮೂಲಕ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ:13.04.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.30** ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ:**15.04.2026** ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ **11.00** ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಶಾಖೆ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರನ್ನು ಅಂಗೀಕರಿಸುವ ಅಥವಾ ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸುವ ಹಕ್ಕನ್ನು ನಗರಸಭೆ ಕಾಯ್ದಿರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಜಿ.ಎಸ್.ಟಿ.ಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾಗಿ ಪಾವತಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ವಿವರಗಳು	ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ.ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)	ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ. ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)	ನಿಗಧಿಗೊಂಡ ಮೀಸಲಾತಿ
1	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT56229	50.00	85,000.00	OTHERS

ಸಹಿ/– ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು
ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹೂಟಗಳ್ಳಿ
ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಮೈಸೂರು/ತಿರಡಿಸಾಯಿ/1900/2025–26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಪತ್ರಾಗಾರ ಮತ್ತು ಗ್ಯಾಸೆಟಿಯರ್ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ಡಾ. ಅಂಬೇಡ್ಕರ್ ವೀಧಿ, ವಿಕಾಸ ಸೌಧ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು – 560 001.

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: KSAD/2025-26/SE0009 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 26.03.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರಿಗೆ ತಿಳಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಪತ್ರಾಗಾರ ಮತ್ತು ಗ್ಯಾಸೆಟಿಯರ್ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಕಚೇರಿ **ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಹಾಗೂ ಮೈಸೂರು, ಧಾರವಾಡ, ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ವಿಭಾಗೀಯ ಕಚೇರಿಗಳ ಕಾರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆಗಾಗಿ ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ನೌಕರರ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಲು** ಇ–ಆಡಳಿತ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು ನೋಂದಾಯಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಿಂದ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರನ್ನು ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡಂತೆ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

1) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಾರಂಭ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 26.03.2026ರ ಸಂಜೆ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆಯಿಂದ.**
2) ಪ್ರೀ–ಬಿಡ್ ಮೀಟಿಂಗ್ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 07.04.2026ರ ಅಪರಾಹ್ನ 12.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ.**
3) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 25.04.2026ರ ಸಂಜೆ 5:30 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ.**
4) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 27.04.2026ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 10:00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ.**
5) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 28.04.2026ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 10.30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ.**

ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲಿಚ್ಛಿಸುವ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ದಾರರು ಅರ್ಹತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಷರತ್ತುಗಳ ವಿವರ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿಗಳನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ Help Deskನ್ನು ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: +918046010000, +91–8068948777ರ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು
DIPR/CP/6493/SA/2025-26

WASHINGTON

U.S. weighs sending up to 10,000 troops to West Asia, say reports

AFP

The United States is weighing sending up to 10,000 extra troops to the West Asia, *Wall Street Journal* reported on Friday, as speculation grows that Washington may be preparing a ground operation in Iran. The deployment is despite U.S. President Donald Trump insisting that Tehran was taking part in peace talks. AFP

WASHINGTON

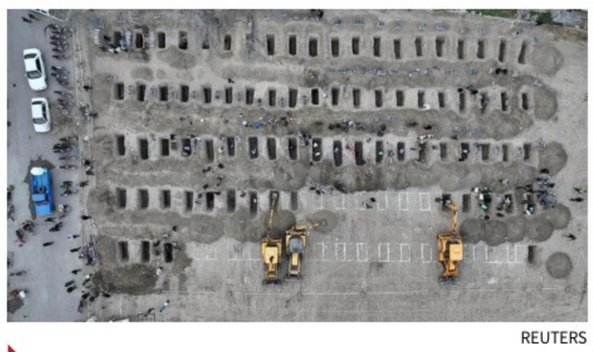
Iran-linked hackers claim breach of FBI director's personal email

REUTERS

Iran-linked hackers have publicly claimed the breach of FBI Director Kash Patel's personal inbox, publishing photographs of the director and his purported resume to the Internet. On their website, the hacker group Handala Hack Team said Mr. Patel "will now find his name among the list of successfully hacked victims". REUTERS

GENEVA

Iran Foreign Minister accuses U.S. of 'calculated' assault on school

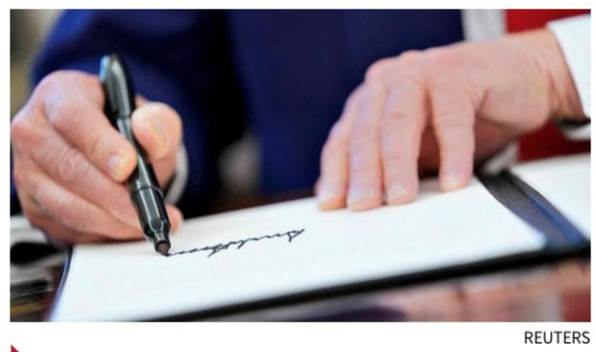


REUTERS

Iran's Foreign Minister on Friday branded a deadly strike on an Iranian school on the first day of the West Asia war as a "calculated" U.S. assault. Abbas Araghchi said "more than 175 students and teachers were slaughtered in cold blood" in a "calculated, phased assault" in the February 28 strike on an Iranian school in Minab. AFP

WASHINGTON

U.S. Treasury plans to put Trump's signature on new paper currency



REUTERS

The U.S. Treasury Department plans to put President Donald Trump's signature on all new U.S. paper currency, the agency announced on Thursday. The move would be a first for a sitting President, since traditionally, U.S. paper currency carries the signatures of the Treasury Secretary and the Treasurer. AP

Trump delays strikes on Iran again, says discussions are going 'very well'

U.S. President announces pause on potential strikes against Iran's power plants until April 6; while Trump claims talks are on, Iran denies direct negotiations; IRGC claims attacks on Israeli targets in Ashdod and U.S. bases in UAE and Kuwait

Stanly Johny

U.S. President Donald Trump on Thursday said he is pausing any strike on Iran's power plants until April 6 and added that "talks" with the Islamic Republic are going "very well".

Mr. Trump, on March 21, had issued a 48-hour ultimatum to Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz or face U.S. attacks on its power plants. Iran responded saying it would hit back at the energy infrastructure and American economic interests across the Persian Gulf. On March 23, Mr. Trump took an abrupt U-turn, saying he was in talks with Tehran and postponed strikes by five days.

Heavy bombardment: Firefighters look for victims and inspect damages at a residential building in southern Tehran on Friday. AFP

His new deadline was set to expire on Friday.

"I am pausing the period of Energy Plant destruction by 10 Days to Monday, April 6, 2026, at 8 P.M., Eastern Time. Talks are ongoing and, despite erroneous statements to the contrary by the Fake News Media, and others, they are going very well," Mr. Trump wrote in a social media post on Thursday night.

Iran has denied holding talks with the U.S. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said on Wednesday that Islamabad had relayed a 15-point peace plan from Washington to Tehran. Iran's state media reported that Tehran has dismissed the U.S. plan and made counter-proposals.

While conflicting messages are emerging about talks, Israel and Iran continued to trade fire on Friday. Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz said that Tel Aviv would ramp up air strikes on Iran in the coming days. The Israeli military also confirmed late on Friday that it struck a heavy water reactor and a uranium processing plant in central Iran, according to an *AFP* report.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said in a statement that it targeted storage tanks and the oil depot in Ashdod, Israel, and a U.S. military information exchange centre in the region. "The IRGC also struck American military bases at Al-Dhafra [in the UAE], along with maintenance and storage hangars at Ali Al-Salem Air Base [Kuwait]," it said.

Balendra Shah sworn in as Prime Minister of Nepal

Sanjeev Satgainya
KATHMANDU

Balendra Shah on Friday became Nepal's new Prime Minister, the youngest in the country's recent political history at 35.

Mr. Shah, popularly known as Balen, was sworn in by President Ram Chandra Poudel at a ceremony in Kathmandu, marking an end to the transition triggered by September last year's Gen Z protests, which overthrew the K.P. Sharma Oli government and installed an interim dispensation led by former Chief Justice Sushila Karki.

Mr. Shah won the March 5 elections on the ticket of the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), which secured close to a two-thirds majority, defeating Mr. Oli in the latter's home turf.

Often termed a "former rapper" or "rapper-turned-politician," Mr. Shah, also a structural engineer by training, reaffirmed his rapper identity by releasing his latest song on Thursday evening, hours after his oath as a Member of Parliament and a day before his swearing-in as Prime Minister.

"Jay Mahakali out now :)" Balen wrote on X, sharing the YouTube video of his new song. The song, comprising clips from his election campaign, carries nationalist fervour, with lyrics saying: "undivided Nepali... history is being made." The video racked up more than three million views in less than 24 hours.

Expectations are already high among Nepalis who voted for the RSP – and especially Balen – with the hope of change. Analysts say Nepal is once again on the cusp of a massive transformation if things go well, but caution that the entrenched system and patronage-fuelled culture could continue to hinder efforts.

Balendra Shah

High hopes

"The immediate challenge I see is managing public expectations, as people have high hopes of him," said Nishant Khanal, an economist. "But the delivery mechanisms and institutions are the same old. The defining challenge is whether the new administration can resist the institutional capture that has consumed every Nepali government since 1990."

Last year's protests by Nepal's tech-savvy youth – dubbed Gen Z – demanded clean governance, accountability, and an end to corruption perpetuated by the ageing political class. They argued that the same old rotating faces and parties in power were so disconnected from the public that issues such as jobs and basic service delivery never became priorities. In a way, they called for a generational shift in Nepali politics. Mr. Shah's elevation – and his Cabinet with new and young faces – reflects that shift.

Just as Nepal approached elections, war broke out in West Asia, and its effects have now begun to be felt in the country as the conflict continues. Cooking gas has already been rationed, fuel prices have been hiked twice in as many weeks, commodity prices have risen, and tourism has been hit. Between one and 1.5 million Nepalis work in the Gulf region, and ensuring their safety – along with the safe return of those willing to come home – will also be a major challenge. Remittances sent by them are the mainstay of Nepal's economy, and a halt in remittances could lead to structural vulnerabilities.

The Shah government will have to tackle these issues almost immediately. The established parties that were routed are likely to make these issues their top agenda, with street protests a possibility.

The RSP has promised to expand the economy to $100 billion from the current $45 billion, raise per capita income to over $3,000 from $1,500, create 1.2 million jobs, and raise electricity generation to 15,000 megawatts in the next five years.

Wedged between India and China, two of the world's largest economies, Nepal has long found it difficult to balance its foreign policy. With the United States, a long-time development partner, also in the mix, the geopolitical landscape becomes even more complex.

IDF chief warns of potential collapse, says report

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Israel Defence Forces (IDF) chief Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir told a security cabinet meeting that the military "is going to collapse in on itself" amid a growing manpower shortage, Israeli media reported.

"I am raising 10 red flags in front of you. Right now, the IDF needs a conscription law, a reserve duty law, and a law to extend mandatory service," Gen. Zamir told Ministers, according to a report by *Channel 13*. "Before long, the IDF will not be ready for its routine missions and the reserve system will not last," he said. *The Times of Israel* also reported his comments.

Gen. Zamir's comments came at a time when Israel is fighting wars on different fronts. It has been carrying out extensive air strikes on Iran since February 28. The IDF has also invaded Lebanon to fight Hezbollah and occupy more Lebanese territory in the south. In the West Bank, where settler violence against Palestinians is on the rise, the IDF has deployed thousands of troops.

On Thursday, the IDF announced that an Israeli soldier was killed and four others wounded in a Hezbollah anti-tank missile attack. Since the latest fighting with Hezbollah began on March 2, at least four Israeli troops have been killed. Hezbollah says it is resisting the Israeli invasion in the south, and has launched hundreds of rockets into Israel in the past three weeks. According to Lebanese authorities, at least 1,070 were killed by Israeli strikes since March 2. Over 1 million have been displaced.

Israeli soldiers take a position along the Israel-Lebanon border. AFP

Israel's Opposition Leader Yair Lapid blamed the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for "sending the army into a multi-front war without a strategy, without sufficient resources, and with too few soldiers."

"This time, the government will not be able to say, 'I didn't know.' This is the chief of staff they appointed, and they will not be able to shift the blame onto him," Mr. Lapid said.

G-7 allies press Rubio for clarity on American plans for Iran war

Agence France-Presse
CERNAY-LA-VILLE

G-7 allies were on Friday pressing U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio for clarity on American plans for Iran almost one month into the war in the West Asia, with concern also intensifying over the extent of cooperation between Russia and the Islamic republic.

German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul said the international community needed to collaborate even more closely now it was dealing with two wars – including the conflict sparked by Moscow's invasion of Ukraine – in which Russia and Iran were cooperating.

In contrast to usual protocol, and in a sign of the distance between the United States and its allies, there is to be no joint communique at the end of the meeting.

The UK's Foreign Minister Yvette Cooper urged a "swift resolution to this conflict that restores regional stability".

Mr. Rubio said earlier that it was in the "interest" of all G-7 nations to push for the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz.

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT UTPADAN NIGAM LIMITED
CIN:- U40102RJ2000SGC016484 (A Govt. of Rajasthan Undertaking)
O/o CE(fuel), 6th Floor, LIC Jeevandeep Building, Lalkothi, Jaipur
E-TENDER NOTICE: TN-20(RVU2526WLOB02610)
Online Tenders are invited for **Supply, Application work & performance monitoring of 7.78 Lac Kg Multifunctional Combustion Catalyst for Coal for CTPP-SC, STPS-SC and KATPP.** Tender details are available on http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in (for e-tender), www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvunl & www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in.
Raj.Samwad/C/25/23352 RVUN/PR-4370 Superintending Engineer (Fuel)

The Kerala Minerals & Metals Ltd
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking) Sankaramangalam, Kollam,-691583
Phone : +91-476-2651215 to 217, E-mail : md@kmml.com, URL: www.kmml.com
TENDER NOTICE
For more details, please visit E- Tendering Portal https://etenders.kerala.gov.in.or www.kmml.com

No	Tender ID	Items
1.	2026_KMML_848032_1	Supply of Welding Generator
2.	2026_KMML_845413_1	AMC for providing external inspection & follow up
3.	2026_KMML_848089_1	Supply of Coconut
4.	2026_KMML_848050_1	Supply of rail for clarifloculator
5.	2026_KMML_848037_1	Supply of 150MR Pipe seamless CS-250mm
6.	2026_KMML_848029_1	Supply of Digester Petals
7.	2026_KMML_848036_1	Supply of Quick Opening Door for Rotary Digester

Chavara. 28.03.2026 Sd/ Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, अंतरिक्ष विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
विक्रम साराभाई अंतरिक्ष केंद्र / VIKRAM SARABHAI SPACE CENTRE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण ग्रूप / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP
तिरुवनंतपुरम / THIRUVANANTHAPURAM – 22 / (फोन नं. / Ph. No. 0471 – 2564568 / 4545 / 5669)
दिनांक/Dated : 26-03-2026
ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करते हुए संक्षिप्त सूचना / BRIEF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए ई-टेंडरिंग द्वारा ऑनलाइन मद-दर निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। On behalf of the President of India, online item-rate tenders are invited through E-tendering for the following works.
1. आरपीपी, वीएसएससी के पीएसओएम एक्सएल / गगनयान हार्डवेयर प्रहस्तन सुविधा हेतु प्रस्तावित भवन में विद्युत कार्य / Electrical works in proposed building for PSOM XL / Gaganyaan hardware handling facility at RPP, **VSSC / VSSC/CMG/E01/36/2025-2026 Dated 23.03.2026 (पी.ए.सी./P.A.C: ₹ 39.45 लाख/Lakh)**
डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading: दिनांक 24.03.2026 को 10.00 बजे/ hrs. से/ to दिनांक 06.04.2026, 23.00 बजे/ hrs. (Sl. No. 1)
2. आरएटीएफ सबस्टेशन, टर्ल्स, वीएसएससी के संवर्धन / Augmentation of RATF substation, TERLS, VSSC / **VSSC/CMG/E01/37/2025-2026 Dated 26.03.2026 (पी.ए.सी./P.A.C: ₹ 200.16 लाख/Lakh)**
डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading: दिनांक 28.03.2026 को 10.00 बजे/hrs. से/to दिनांक 12.04.2026, 23.00 बजे/hrs. (Sl. No. 2)
ई-निविदा की अवधि बढ़ाना / EXTENSION OF E-TENDER
3. वट्टीयुरकावू में 500 घन मी. क्षमता की वृत्ताकार उन्नयित जल टंकी का निर्माण (सिविल तथा पीएच कार्य) / Construction of 500 Cum capacity circular elevated water tank at Vattiyoorkavu (Civil & PH works) / **VSSC/CMG/C01/30/2025-26 Dt. 04.03.2026 (पी.ए.सी./P.A.C: ₹ 409.07 लाख/Lakh)**
4. वीआरसी मुख्य भवन फेस-2, वीएसएससी के संवर्धन हेतु 1500 कि. ग्रा. माल उत्थापक की अभिकल्पना, संविरचन, आपूर्ति, उन्निर्माण, परिक्षण और कमीशनिंग / Design, Fabrication, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 1500 kg Goods Elevator for augmentation of VRC Main Building Phase-2, VSSC / **VSSC/CMG/M01/03/2025-2026 Dated 04.03.2026 (पी.ए.सी./P.A.C: ₹ 30.99 लाख/Lakh)**
डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading: दिनांक 05.04.2026 को 23.00 बजे तक बढ़ाए गए /Extended upto 23:00 hrs. on 05.04.2026 (Sl. No. 3 & 4)
इच्छुक निविदाकार ब्यौरों के लिए www.tenderwizard.com/isro या www.isro.gov.in देखें। Interested tenderers may visit www.tenderwizard.com/isro or www.isro.gov.in for details.
Sd/- प्रधान, सीएमजी, वीएसएससी / Head, CMG, VSSC

Myanmar junta signals change in leadership as parade begins

Agence France-Presse
NAYPYIDAW

Myanmar's junta signalled changes in the military's leadership ahead of the country's annual show of force on Friday, potentially clearing the way for defence chief Min Aung Hlaing to become President.

Tanks and military trucks laden with rocket launchers trundled through the streets as thousands of soldiers marched for Armed Forces Day in the capital Naypyidaw.

Min Aung Hlaing has ruled by diktat since ousting the hugely popular government of Aung San Suu Kyi in 2021 – detaining the Nobel Peace Prize laureate, dissolving her party and triggering civil war.

UTTARAKHAND CIVIL AVIATION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
(DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION) (GOVERNMENT OF UTTARAKHAND)
SAHASTRADHARA HELIDROME, P.O. KULHAN, DEHRADUN- 248001, UTTARAKHAND
EMAIL: UCADADOON@GMAIL.COM; WEBSITE: WWW.UCADA.IN
No. 4024/UCADA/2026 Date: 27/03/2026
ADVERTISEMENT
Applications are invited from Indian nationals with full particulars for the following Post on Contract Basis in the Uttarakhand Civil Aviation Development Authority, (UCADA) Government of Uttarakhand:-

S. No.	Post Name	Qualification & Experience Requirements	Vacancy	Salary	Remarks
1.	Air Traffic controller officer (ATCOS)	Minimum five years' experience in Indian air Force or Civil ATC as ATC officer/controller	06	1,50,000/- (Per Month)	For Char Dham Yatra 2026

Last Submission Date 04 April, 2026.
Application should reach UCADA, through E-mail **ucadadoon@gmail.com** till 04-04-2026.
CEO, UCADA

Government of India
Department of Space
ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC)
Mahendragiri P.O., Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu– 627 133, India
E-TENDER NOTICE Dated : 27-03-2026
On behalf of the President of India, online EPC tenders are invited through **e-tendering** for the following work

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost ₹ (in Lakhs)	Period of completion	EMD(₹)
1	NIT no:IPRC/CMG/TD/e-193/MW/EPC-01/2025-26			
	Planning, Design, Construction, Commissioning and Operation of Planetarium/Space Theatre at Kanniyakumari, Tamilnadu. (Civil, Electrical, AC, Theatre Equipment and allied works in EPC Mode-1)	3,559.00	18 (Eighteen months)	45,60,000

Dates for Online Request : From 28-03-2026 [1000 hours] To: 13-04-2026 [2330 hours]
Due Time & Date of Submission : 21-04-2026 [1400 hours]
For further details visit: www.isro.gov.in/tenders (or) www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.
For eligibility criteria and other details, interested tenderers may please refer to the detailed bilingual (Hindi-English) Notice Inviting Tenders (NIT) on the website https://www.isro.gov.in/Tenders.html and tender free view at https://www.tenderwizard.com/isro
Note : All future correspondence (Corrigenda) for the above work(s) shall be published only on the websites mentioned above.
GROUP HEAD, CMG, IPRC.

Sudha Ragunathan: a lifetime of excellence in Carnatic music

Sudha Ragunathan, who has spent close to five decades as a Carnatic vocalist, bagged The Hindu Lifetime Achievement Award. The Government of India recognised her with the Padma Bhushan in 2015 and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 2022, while the Music Academy also conferred on her the Sangita Kalanidhi award. Ms. Ragunathan holds the distinction of being the only Carnatic musician after the legendary vocalist M.S. Subbulakshmi to have performed at the United Nations. The award was presented by Rupa Anand, wife of G.R. Ananthapadmanabhan of the GRT Group, Chairperson of The Hindu Group Nirmala Lakshman, and L.V. Navaneeth, CEO of The Hindu Group.

Yogita Bhayana: on a mission to eliminate sexual violence

Yogita Bhayana, founder of People Against Rapes in India (PARI), has worked on advocacy, legal support, and policy reform for survivors of sexual violence. She was recognised with the Contribution to Society Award at The Hindu World of Women 2026. She came into national focus after the 2012 Nirbhaya case and has since provided legal assistance to survivors through PARI. Her campaign to amend juvenile justice laws in rape cases helped lower the age from 18 to 16 years. She also led a plea seeking an annual parliamentary session on women's issues. The award was presented to her by Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson of The Hindu Group, and Meghanatha Reddy, Member Secretary of Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu.

Sheelu Francis: a champion of rights of rural women

The Hindu Excellence in Agriculture and Rural Development Award was conferred on Sheelu Francis for her pioneering work in empowering rural women. In 1994, at a time when women's leadership in society was still uncommon, she founded the Women's Collective in Tamil Nadu to secure rights, not charity, for the most marginalised. Over three decades, the collective has expanded across 19 districts, reaching more than 1,000 villages in 581 panchayats, mobilising over 1,00,000 women. Its work spans Dalit rights, sustainable agriculture, local governance, etc. The award was presented by Chairperson of The Hindu Group Nirmala Lakshman and V. Krishnakumar, Vice-President, Marketing, Aqua Group.

Geeta Dharmarajan: turning stories into agents of change

The Hindu Excellence in Academic and Education Award was conferred on Geeta Dharmarajan. In 1988, she founded Katha, rooted in the belief that access to stories can transform lives. The Katha Lab School now educates over 2,000 students. Her Story Pedagogy model is used across government schools, while Katha's 400-plus books have reached over a million children. A Padma Shri awardee, she was also recognised by Millennium Alliance. The award was presented by Rupa Anand, wife of G.R. Ananthapadmanabhan of the GRT Group, Chairperson of The Hindu Group Nirmala Lakshman, and Meghanatha Reddy, Member Secretary of Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu.

Swathy Rohit: taking inclusive healthcare into classrooms

Swathy Rohit, founder of Health Basix, built a school-based healthcare platform that delivers physical, mental and special education services to children. Through this model, she focused on early intervention and improving access to integrated care across schools. Her work in building and scaling this platform earned her the Excellence in Entrepreneurship Award at The Hindu World of Women 2026. She is also a co-founder of the Centre for Mental Health Policy, where she works on addressing mental health challenges in India. The award was presented by Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson, The Hindu Group, and S. Manimangai, MD, SRM Global Hospitals.

Anuja Amin: dedicated to the cause of child safety

The Hindu Influencer Award was presented to Anuja Amin. She chose to turn personal experience into purposeful action. Motivated by her own journey, she founded Circles of Safety, a social enterprise dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. Through structured workshops and a rights-based curriculum, her organisation reached out to almost 15,000 children and 10,000 adults, enabling conversations around body safety, consent, and healthy relationships – topics often left unspoken. The award was presented by Sundaresan S., Vice-President Advt.-South, The Hindu Group; and Chairperson of The Hindu Group Nirmala Lakshman.

Anupama Ramachandran: the face of India's snooker ascent

Anupama Ramachandran, a snooker player from Chennai, has built a strong record across international and national competitions. She was 15 when she won the gold medal at the IBSF World Open Under-16 Championship in Russia in 2017. In November 2025, she became the first Indian woman to win the IBSF Women's World Snooker Championship. At The Hindu World of Women 2026, she received the Excellence in Sports Award. It was presented to her by Chairperson of The Hindu Group Nirmala Lakshman and Manoj Vasudevan, marketing head, DRA Homes. She holds the Indian record for the highest break by a woman player, with a score of 119.

Radikaa Sarathkumar: actor of vigour and versatility

Actor and producer Radikaa Sarathkumar has a career spanning over four decades across Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, and Hindi cinema, appearing in over 300 films. Introduced by director Bharathiraja in *Kizhake Pogum Rayil*, she went on to establish herself as a versatile performer. She received the Excellence in Entertainment Award at the The Hindu World of Women 2026. She has also built a strong presence in television production, producing *Meendum Oru Kadhal Kadhai,* which won the National Award for Best Producer in 1984. The award was presented to her by Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson, The Hindu Group and Praveen, Lakshmi Agency, authorised business associate Gold Winner, Kaleesuwari.

The Hindu celebrates women across domains

Achievers from multiple spheres, ranging from healthcare to rural development, were felicitated and the immense contributions they made, breaking barriers along the way, were acknowledged

Honouring changemakers: Winners of the World of Women 2026 Awards with Chairperson of The Hindu Group Nirmala Lakshman and Chief Executive Officer L.V. Navaneeth in Chennai on Friday. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

At The Hindu Group's World of Women (WoW) Awards 2026, themed "Breaking Ceilings. Reaching for the Skies", women from multiple spheres and sectors were honoured across thirteen categories of awards from healthcare to rural development on Friday, celebrating their broad list of achievements, while also acknowledging the barriers that they have broken along the way.

The World of Women Awards is more than a platform of recognition since it is a celebration of purpose and perseverance, said Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson, The Hindu Group. "Each category represented, whether it is leadership in business, innovation in entrepreneurship, contribution to society, advancements in health and education, excellence in sports, or impact in arts and culture – tells a powerful story of courage, determination, and vision," said Ms. Lakshman, adding that from those driving change at the grassroots level to those influencing industries and institutions, each journey is unique yet united by a common thread of strength and intent.

"Recognising women across diverse domains is not only about celebration – but also about reinforcing the importance of representation, opportunity, and equality in every sphere of life," she added. Ms. Lakshman also said that the award function is a reminder that when women rise, communities, industries, and societies move forward because the impact of their achievements opens doors, and inspires future generations to dream bigger.

> When women rise, communities, industries, and societies move forward as the impact of their achievements opens doors, and inspires future generations to also dream bigger
>
> **NIRMALA LAKSHMAN**
> Chairperson, The Hindu Group

Award winners

The Hindu Achievement in Surpassing Disability Award was given to Kasthuri Rajamani and The Hindu Lifetime Achievement Award was awarded to Sudha Ragunathan.

Meanwhile, The Hindu Inspiring Influencer Award was given to Anuja Amin and The Hindu GRT Generational Pride Award was given to Sreeja Ravi and Raveena Ravi.

The Hindu Excellence in Entertainment Award was bagged by actor Radikaa Sarathkumar and The Hindu Excellence in Art, Music and Culture Award was conferred on Kapila Venu. The Hindu Excellence in Agriculture and Rural Development Award was given to Sheelu Francis. The Hindu Excellence in Academic and Education Award was received by Geeta Dharmarajan and The Hindu Excellence in Health and Hygiene Award went to Revathi Raj. The Hindu Contribution to Society Award was given to Yogita Bhayana and The Hindu Excellence in Entrepreneurship Award was awarded to Swathy Rohit.

The Hindu Excellence in Business Leadership Award was given to Gowri Kailasam and The Hindu Excellence in Sports Award went to Anupama Ramachandran.

Sponsors

- **GRT Jewellers**
  Presenting sponsor
- **Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology (Deemed to be University)**
  Co-sponsor
- **DRA Homes**
- **Gold Winner**
  In association
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- **Puthiya Thalaimurai**
- **Puthu Yugam**
  Television partners
- **Madras Management Association (MMA)**
  Industry partner

Sreeja Ravi and Raveena Ravi conferred The Hindu GRT Generational Pride Award

Sreeja Ravi and Raveena Ravi, mother-daughter duo who were honoured with The Hindu GRT Generational Pride Award, dedicated their award to Ms. Sreeja's mother, Narayani, who was an actor, theatre artist, and pioneered in dubbing too. Ms. Sreeja has lent her voice to more than 2,000 films and productions across seven Indian languages, earning four Kerala State Film Awards and the Tamil Nadu State Film Award for dubbing. This year, she received the Kerala State Award for Best Dubbing Artist for Television, her fifth state recognition. She has appeared in over 35 films, with *Tourist Family* being her most recent release. With over 170 dubbing credits across Tamil, Malayalam, and Telugu, Ms. Raveena too has established herself as one of the most sought-after voice artistes currently. As an actor, she has headlined twelve films and appeared in supporting roles in several others. The award to the mother and daughter duo was presented by Rupa Anand, wife of G.R. Ananthapadmanabhan of GRT Group, Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson, The Hindu Group, and K.C. Vijaya Kumar, Sports Editor of The Hindu.

Revathi Raj: redefining care for children with cancer

The Hindu Excellence in Health and Hygiene Award was presented to Revathi Raj, Senior Consultant in Paediatric Haematology Oncology. She joined Apollo Hospitals, Chennai, in 2002 and has since performed over 1,500 paediatric bone marrow transplants, including the country's first successful unrelated donor transplant. As Honorary President of the VHS Thalassaemia Centre, she has helped over 500 children recover from thalassaemia, including 300 from below-poverty-line families. Rupa Anand, wife of G.R. Ananthapadmanabhan of GRT Group, and Chairperson of The Hindu Group Nirmala Lakshman presented the award.

Gowri Kailasam: driving excellence in industry

Gowri Kailasam, CEO of Rane (Madras) Limited, was honoured with The Hindu Excellence in Business Leadership Award. She began her career at Ford Motor Company, gaining extensive international experience. At Rane, she rose to leadership and guided the company to both the Deming Prize and the Deming Grand Prize. She serves as Chairperson of Indian Women Network, Southern Region, and as Vice-Chairperson of the CII Chennai zone, committed to strengthening industry standards. The award was presented by Chairperson of The Hindu Group Nirmala Lakshman and Manoj Vasudevan, Marketing Head, DRA Homes.

Kapila Venu: taking forward an ancient theatre tradition

Kapila Venu is a proponent of Kutiyattam, one of the world's oldest-living theatre traditions. It demands years of rigorous training and mastery of Sanskrit performance, and lifelong dedication. Kapila Venu embodies this rare commitment, bringing the form to global audiences. A disciple of Guru Ammannur Madhava Chakyar and trained in Mohiniyattam by her mother, Guru Nirmala Paniker, she has spent over two decades performing, teaching, and conducting workshops worldwide. The award was given by Suresh Balakrishna, Chief Revenue Officer, The Hindu Group; and Chairperson of The Hindu Group Nirmala Lakshman.

Kasthuri Rajamani: top name in Indian para powerlifting

Winning The Hindu Achievement in Surpassing Disability Award at The Hindu World of Women 2026, para powerlifter Kasthuri Rajamani has established herself as a leading figure in India's para sports circuit. In 2023, Ms. Rajamani won two gold medals at the IWAS World Games and became the first Indian woman in her category to lift over 100 kg at the Asian Games. She represented India at the Paris Paralympics in 2024 and secured a bronze medal at the World Cup the same year. The award was presented to her by Chairperson of The Hindu Group Nirmala Lakshman and Rupa Anand, wife of G.R. Ananthapadmanabhan of GRT Group.

BIG MISS

'Hazlewood has just landed, he is unavailable for season opener'

K. MURALI KUMAR

Royal Challengers Bengaluru coach Andy Flower revealed that Josh Hazlewood will not feature in Saturday's outing. "He will not be ready; he has just got off the plane. We will be monitoring his fitness very closely, and we are looking forward to him making his entrance into the IPL," the former Zimbabwe skipper said.

HONEST TAKE

Attacking style will be a challenge on tricky surfaces, admits Vettori

K. MURALI KUMAR

SRH is known for its all-out attacking approach, but adapting to challenging conditions could be the key to success. "We are an aggressive team that bats deep. On really good surfaces, our batters are difficult to stop. The challenge is when we get surfaces that are a little tricky," SRH head coach Daniel Vettori said.

BACK-UP PLAN

Mangesh, Abhinandan and Rasikh are competing for a place: Flower

K. MURALI KUMAR

With Yash Dayal and Josh Hazlewood out of action, RCB is banking on uncapped Indian pacers to come good. "We have Mangesh Yadav, Abhinandan Singh and Rasikh Salam, *right in pic*, competing for a place. I'm not going to tell you who's playing, but we're happy with Mangesh replacing Yash," RCB head coach Andy Flower said.

IDEAL SPOT

Batting at No. 4 gives Klaasen some time to settle in: Vettori

K. MURALI KUMAR

I think Heinrich Klaasen will come in more often than not at No. 4. I think it suits him really well. It gives him some time to settle in, take a couple of balls and then be the explosive batter that he is. And we've got a number of candidates this year to fit those No. 5, 6, 7 slots — SRH head coach Daniel Vettori.

Shift in dynamics as spotlight turns to Indian core

Foreign recruits are increasingly being used to plug supply gaps; how effectively teams harness domestic talent while complementing it with overseas stars will hold the key in the new season

When the drum beats GET LOUDER...

The dug-outs will be buzzing again as the revamped and recharged franchises take guard for the 19th chapter of the globe's popular T20 league. It's time to scan the pages of the past

RULERS & ARCHITECTS

Chennai Super Kings (5)

	2010	2011	2018	2021	2023
FINAL	bt MI by 22 runs	bt RCB by 58 runs	bt SRH by eight wickets	bt KKR by 27 runs	bt GT by five wickets (DLS Method)
Most Runs	Raina (520)	Michael Hussey (492)	Rayudu (602)	Ruturaj (635)	Conway (672)
Most Wickets	Muralitharan (15)	R. Ashwin (20)	Shardul (16)	Shardul (21)	Deshpande (21)

■ CSK HAS REACHED THE MOST FINALS (10)

Mumbai Indians (5)

	2013	2015	2017	2019	2020
FINAL	bt CSK by 23 runs	bt CSK by 41 runs	bt RPS by one run	bt CSK by one run	bt DC by five wickets
Most Runs	Rohit (538)	Lendl Simmons (540)	Parthiv (395)	de Kock (529)	Kishan (516)
Most Wickets	Mitchell Johnson & Harbhajan (24 each)	Malinga (24)	Bumrah (20)	Bumrah (19)	Bumrah (27)

Kolkata Knight Riders (3)

	2012	2014	2024
FINAL	bt CSK by five wickets	bt Kings XI Punjab by three wickets	bt SRH by eight wickets
Most Runs	Gambhir (590)	Uthappa (660)	Narine (488)
Most Wickets	Narine (24)	Narine (21)	Varun (21)

Rajasthan Royals (1)

	2008
FINAL	bt CSK by three wickets
Most Runs	Watson (472)
Most Wickets	Tanvir (22)

Sunrisers Hyderabad (1)

	2016
FINAL	bt RCB by eight runs
Most Runs	Warner (848)
Most Wickets	Bhuvneshwar (23)

Deccan Chargers (1)

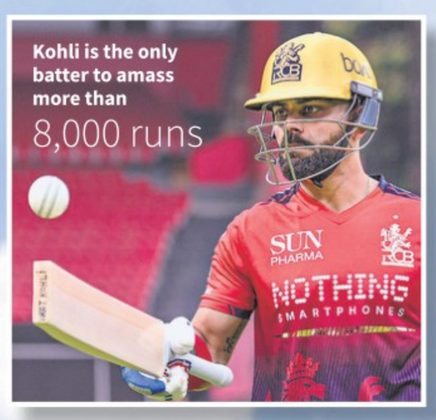
	2009
FINAL	bt RCB by six runs
Most Runs	Gilchrist (495)
Most Wickets	R.P. Singh (23)

Gujarat Titans (1)

	2022
FINAL	bt RR by seven wickets
Most Runs	Hardik (487)
Most Wickets	Shami (20)

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (1)

	2025
FINAL	bt PBKS by six runs
Most Runs	Kohli (657)
Most Wickets	Hazlewood (22)



Chahal is the lone bowler to scalp over 200 wickets

THE PEAKS

OVERALL		2025
Kohli (8,661)	RUNS	Sai Sudharsan (759), GT
Gayle (357)	SIXES	Pooran (40), LSG
Chahal (221)	WICKETS	Prasidh (25), GT
Bhuvneshwar (1,852)	DOT BALLS	Siraj (151), GT

SOURCE: ESPNCRICINFO
COMPILED BY R. NARAYANAN, G. PRASAD & S. SHRIVATHSAN

THE EXTRAS

- Krunal has bagged the Player-of-the-Final prize twice – MI (2017) and RCB (2025)
- Sangakkara (Deccan Chargers and SRH), White (Deccan Chargers and SRH) and Steve Smith (PWI and RPS) have captained two franchises from the same city
- Dhoni, Kohli, Rohit and Manish Pandey have featured in all 18 editions. Kohli is the only one to play for the same team (RCB)
- Finch has represented nine teams – RR, DD, PWI, SRH, MI, GL, KXIP, RCB and KKR – the most by any player in the league
- Since 2018, the team that has won Qualifier 1 has gone on to emerge champion
- Aryaman Birla, the new chairman of RCB after the ownership change, was once part of the RR squad but never played a match

IPL-19

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

Ishan Kishan's elevation to the helm of Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH), albeit on a temporary basis, signals a shift in IPL dynamics.

The league, which for the first time begins with all franchises boasting home-grown captains, is rebalancing to showcase, develop and depend on Indian assets.

Franchises have come to realise the abundance of domestic talent, with a pool that offers credible options for every role.

While proven performers like Jasprit Bumrah, Virat Kohli and Suryakumar Yadav continue to lead the charge, uncapped players have risen significantly in stature. Teenager Vaibhav Suryavanshi, who lit up IPL 2025, is proof that young talent have earned the trust to be afforded opportunity on the big stage.

The exploits of Punjab Kings (PBKS) batters Priyansh Arya and Nehal Wadhera and Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) leggie Suyash Sharma only strengthen this belief.

On the leadership front, RCB took an early gamble by appointing Rajat Patidar as captain last year, a move that paid rich dividends as he guided the side to a maiden title. This is not to suggest that overseas personnel have fallen out of favour entirely.

Raising eyebrows

However, a few recent instances have raised questions about their reliability. In seasons past, players like Ben Stokes and Harry Brook commanded significant sums at the auction only to miss the action. Such disruptions have nudged franchises towards building more stable Indian core, where availability is guaranteed.

There was a time when the IPL's allure rested heavily on its overseas stars. Players like AB de Villiers and Chris Gayle were not just match-winners but the central figures around whom franchises were built. That dynamic, however, has gradually evolved. In the current landscape, overseas players are increasingly being used to plug supply gaps rather than define the sides.

Additionally, untimely injuries often shift the onus back onto the Indian core. When Royal Challengers take on Sunrisers in the opening match of the 19th edition at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday, the absence of Australian pace stalwarts Pat Cummins (SRH) and Josh Hazlewood (RCB) only reinforces that reality.

As the action unfolds, the spotlight will remain firmly on how effectively teams harness their Indian core while complementing it with high-impact overseas specialists.

For traditional heavyweight Chennai Super Kings, the season presents an opportunity to reset after two underwhelming campaigns.

Mumbai Indians, another perennial favourite, will once again bank on its strong domestic nucleus – Rohit Sharma, Bumrah, Suryakumar and Hardik Pandya – as it chases a crown last won in 2020.

Shreyas Iyer's PBKS, which finished runner-up last year, relies on a group of fearless top-order batters. Spinners Krunal Pandya and Suyash, who exceeded all expectations in RCB's glorious run last season, could take centrestage once again.

While teams search for the right combinations to fit the jigsaw, the Indian contingent is set to lead the way.

Today's match

RCB vs SUNRISERS

Bengaluru, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 25

RCB 11 | SRH 14

PREVIOUS MEETING

SRH won by 42 runs, 2025

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, SS SELECT 1, 2 & JIOHOTSTAR

Kohli is fit and hungry, says Flower

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

As Royal Challengers Bengaluru prepares to go up against Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL 2026 opener here on Saturday, its head coach Andy Flower looked back at fond memories from its maiden title run last season.

"The franchise worked hard for many years to get that star on our shirts. That was embodied most in Virat (Kohli)'s commitment to the franchise over such a long period of time," Flower said on Friday.

Flower drew a comparison between the long-serving RCB stalwart and Sachin Tendulkar. "When I was playing, I used to enjoy watching Sachin practice. The same goes here (with Kohli). I really enjoy watching masters of their art do their thing. Virat looks on top of his game. He looks very fit, very lean, very hungry. Watching him time and strike the ball in training – I think he's at the peak of his prowess."

Sunrisers will take a call on pacer Pat Cummins' availability in about 10 to 12 days, head coach Daniel Vettori said. Cummins is fit, but is working on his bowling load, Vettori added. "His fitness has been exceptional. He's been out of the game for an extended period of time, so he's had time to work on fitness. Hopefully, we can get a definitive timeline, probably in the next 10-12 days, on when he can return to play," Vettori said.

Vettori said three Indian uncapped batters – R. Smaran, Salil Arora and Aniket Verma – are all in the race to gain spots in the team. "Smaran is probably in the best form among anyone in India. Salil's form in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy and warm-up games has been incredibly impressive. We just have to balance our fifth and sixth bowler options".

RCB, PBKS, MI and DC have the might to make the cut

N. Sudarshan

The shortest format of the game is most amenable to upsets. But in a league as long as the IPL – where each team plays a minimum of 14 games – form and luck tend to even out, with the cream eventually rising to the top.

Does that make predictions easy? Definitely not. Elite sport rests on the glorious interplay between risk and reward, and it is anybody's guess as to which way the balance will tilt. But sports prediction is not an exercise in futility either.

There is past history to look at, a wealth of real-time information, and thorough analyses of players' strengths and weaknesses.

With these in mind, here is our humble attempt at IPL top-four prophecy, not necessarily in that order.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru: After having broken its IPL duck last June and retained its winning core – sans Yash Dayal – RCB will be confident.

It will play five of its seven home matches at its beloved M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, a scenario which seemed improbable after the tragic stampede during last year's title-winning celebrations. Star pacer Josh Hazlewood is not fully fit yet, but 2026 is a golden chance to put an on-the-field stamp to its recent $1.76 billion valuation.

Punjab Kings: Its strength is the presence of inspirational men at the top – captain Shreyas Iyer and coach Ricky Ponting.

The two first hit it off in 2020, leading Delhi Capitals to the final, before a repeat in Punjab colours last year. There is a strong Indian core – Shreyas, Priyansh Arya, Prabhsimran Singh, Shashank Singh, Arshdeep Singh and Yuzvendra Chahal – and accomplished overseas men in Marcus Stoinis, Azmatullah Omarzai and Marco Jansen. Will the trophy finally come home?

Mumbai Indians: MI has one of India's greatest leaders, the current T20 World Cup-winning captain and the world's best all-format bowler.

If Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav and Jasprit Bumrah don't get you, skipper Hardik Pandya and Tilak Varma most likely will. Not to mention Ryan Rickelton, Quinton de Kock, Will Jacks, Trent Boult and Mitchell Santner – a team with seemingly no holes. A first final since 2020 should be bare minimum.

Delhi Capitals: DC finished fifth in 2025 after promising much.

But it should be doing a lot better with the talent at its disposal. A team with Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, K.L. Rahul, Tristan Stubbs, David Miller, Mitchell Starc and Lungi Ngidi should be right up there in the conversation.

There is also a capable bunch of domestic cricketers in Nitish Rana, Vipraj Nigam and Abhishek Porel. Can DC take inspiration from RCB and get off the mark?

INBRIEF

Klopp hails Salah as one of Liverpool's 'all-time greats'

Former Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp believes Mohamed Salah will leave the club as one of the "all-time greats", with his "unmatched numbers" likely to prove tough to top for future generations at Anfield. "He (Salah) was part of the best front three [alongside Roberto Firmino and Sadio Mane] in world football for a long time – the one with the most numbers. That says something," said Klopp.

Indian archers finish Asia Cup Stage-1 with a rich haul

Indian archers collected eight more medals, including two gold in compound men's individual and mixed team events, on the concluding day of the Asia Cup Stage-1 archery tournament in Bangkok on Friday. In the compound men's individual final, Uday Kamboj defeated compatriot Prathamesh Jawkar 145-144. Rajat Chauhan bagged the bronze as India made a clean sweep in the category. India gathered a total of 10 medals.

The results: Individual: Recurve: Women: Gold: Ridhi Phor lost to Baasandorj Oyun-Erdene (Mgl) 2-6; **Compound: Men**: **Gold**: Uday Kamboj bt Prathamesh Jawkar 145-144; **Bronze**: Rajat Chauhan bt Peerawat Rattanapangkiat (Tha) 145-144; **Women: Bronze**: Tejal Salve bt Mariia Dimidiuk (AIN) 144-138. **Team: Recurve: Men: Gold**: India (Devaang Gupta, Sukhchain Singh, Juyel Sarkar) lost to Kazakhstan (Dastan Karimov, Ilfat Abdullin, Dauletkeldi Zhnagbyrbay) 4-5 (shoot-off: 27-30); **Compound: Women: Gold**: India (Chikitha Taniparthi, Raj Kaur, Tejal Salve) lost to Kazakhstan (Viktoriya Lyan, Diana Yunussova, Roxana Yunussova) 227-229; **Mixed team: Gold**: India (Chikitha Taniparthi, Rajat Chauhan) bt Malaysia (Fatin Salleh, Mohd. Mazuki) 158-156.

Verstappen tells British scribe to get out of press conference

Max Verstappen sparked a verbal confrontation ahead of the Japanese Grand Prix on Thursday when he refused to start his press conference until a British journalist left the room. "I'm not speaking before he's leaving", and gestured at Giles Richards, a journalist from the *Guardian* newspaper. He left and Verstappen continued with the press conference.

Mysore District-A boys, Viveks SC girls post wins

Mysore District-A beat MCHS BC 83-66 in a boys' match at the State junior basketball championship in Bengaluru on Friday. In a girls' category game, Viveks SC defeated Appaiah BC 44-34.

Sarvagnanagar puts 13 past Yeshwanthpura

Sarvagnanagar trounced Yeshwanthpura 13-0 in the KSFA-Vaishnavi Chief Minister Cup football tournament in Bengaluru on Friday. In the day's other match, Hebbal beat Rajaji Nagar 5-2.

Sai Sudharsan terms captain Gill as the biggest influence on his batting

The southpaw describes the opening partnership as one built on instinct and adaptability; he emphasises the non-judgemental culture at GT

IPL-19

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

Batting partnerships are usually measured in numbers – runs, averages, strike rates. But for Sai Sudharsan at Gujarat Titans, the more compelling story lies beneath: influence, and how it shapes decision-making in real time. In his case, that influence is Shubman Gill.

Answering who's had the biggest influence on his batting over a Zoom call on Friday, he said: "I think I should say Shubman Gill because playing alongside him and watching him play in the nets, I think I've learned a lot.

"It's about having the game sense. Making the right decisions in the game – what we have to do, who we have to target. There are conversations around that – improving the game sense or game awareness. Like, how can we go about things when we are in a particular situation."

He described his opening partnership with skipper Gill as one built on instinct and adaptability. "I think we focus a lot more on percentage – on reacting well rather than having any pre-determined notions. We have similar batting styles, and we both have our own ways of looking at things or tackling a situation. Sometimes, when I'm finding it difficult, Shubman comes to the rescue and that's how our partnership goes."

He added that their pairing can toggle between "maximising the Power-Play" and "offering stability with controlled aggression" as required.

Reflecting on the Gujarat Titans environment, the 24-year-old emphasised its non-judgemental culture. "The biggest thing is that there are no judgements. People will not stop you from what you want to do. It is more expressive than people judging you for what you're doing. It's more of a trial-and-error kind, where you do what you want and learn from it," he said.

With Delhi Capitals captain Axar Patel and Gill already critical of the Impact Player rule, Sai Sudharsan termed it "a cheat code" that "changes team combinations," but refrained from judging its merit.

Learning from the best: Sai Sudharsan will benefit from batting coach Hayden's pearls of wisdom.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Hardik, Navneet win top honours

HI AWARDS

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

The eighth annual Hockey India (HI) awards was held here on Friday afternoon to recognise the standout performances during the 2025 season.

Hardik Singh and Navneet Kaur walked away with the Player-of-the-Year awards in the men's and women's categories respectively. The Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed on Zafar Iqbal, 69, who was part of the gold-winning Indian team at the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

The occasion also saw 31-year-old Gurjant Singh announce his retirement from international hockey. The forward was part of the bronze-winning teams in the last two Olympics.

Hardik and Navneet earned a prize money of ₹20 lakh each. The former had won the top individual honour in 2023 and 2024 too.

"Receiving this award is the highest honour for any Indian hockey player and I'm grateful to Hockey India for this recognition," the 27-year-old Hardik said.

"This award has only been possible because of the support of my family, teammates and coaches who pushed me through tough moments, especially during the Asia Cup triumph."

High point: Hardik and Navneet receive their trophies from Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.
SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Iqbal won the Lifetime Achievement Award.
SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

The midfielder was also felicitated as part of the victorious men's team at the Asia Cup in Rajgir last year. Each player received ₹3 lakh while the coaching staff, helmed by Craig Fulton, was given ₹1.5 lakh each. The junior men's team, which won bronze at the FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup in Tamil Nadu in 2025, was also honoured, with players receiving ₹5 lakh each and support staff receiving ₹2.5 lakh each. The last award of the afternoon was presented to Iqbal. Besides his Olympics gold, the former India captain also won two silver medals at the 1978 and 1982 Asian Games.

"I am thankful to Hockey India that you have recognised this small player with such a big award. My wishes are always with the Indian team," Iqbal said.

The awards: Goalkeeper-of-the-Year: Bichu Devi Kharibam.
Defender-of-the-Year: Sanjay Rana.
Midfielder-of-the-Year: Sumit.
Forward-of-the-Year: Sukhjeet Singh.
Upcoming player (under-21): Women: Sakshi Rana. **Men:** Prince Deep Singh.
Player-of-the-Year: Women: Navneet Kaur. **Men:** Hardik Singh.
Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award: Zafar Iqbal.

LIVE TELECAST

Formula One: Japanese GP (Qualifying), F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 11.30 a.m.
Golf: Indian Open, Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 1.30 p.m.
IPL: Star Sports 1, SS Select 1, 2 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.
European Qualifiers: Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 5 & LIV, 10.30 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Sunday)

Italy keeps hopes alive; Sweden rides on Gyokeres treble

WC PLAYOFFS

Agence France-Presse
BERGAMO

Italy's bid to end a 12-year World Cup absence will continue after beating Northern Ireland 2-0 on Thursday to reach the playoff final.

Sandro Tonali and Moise Kean scored the second-half goals which decided a tight game to book Italy a showdown away from home with Bosnia and Herzegovina on Tuesday.

Rocket strike

Tonali's rocket of a strike in the 56th minute and Kean's excellent finish 10 minutes from the end were two rare moments of quality from a match which had huge significance for four-time world champion Italy.

Wales out

Wales' dream was ended by defeat on penalties after Bosnia and Herzegovina came from behind in Cardiff.

Viktor Gyokeres scored a hat-trick as Sweden brushed Ukraine aside 3-1 on Thursday to set up a showdown with Poland for a spot at the World Cup.

Goalkeeper Matej Kovar saved two penalties in a shootout to take the Czech Republic past Ireland in Prague.

Next assignment

Eyeing their first World Cup berth since 2006, the Czechs now face Denmark in the play-off final in Prague on March 31.

The results (semifinals, aet denotes after extra time):
Turkey 1 (Kadioglu 53) bt Romania 0; Italy 2 (Tonali 56, Kean 80) bt Northern Ireland 0.
Wales 1 (D. James 51) drew with Bosnia and Herzegovina 1 (Dzeko 86) - aet (Bosnia win 4-2 on penalties); Ukraine 1 (Ponomarenko 90) lost to Sweden 3 (Gyokeres 6, 51, 73-pen).
Poland 2 (Lewandowski 63, Zielinski 73) bt Albania 1 (Hoxha 42); Slovakia 3 (Valjent 6, Haraslin 45, Strelec 90+4) lost to Kosovo 4 (Hodza 22, Asllani 47, Muslija 60, Hajrizi 72).
Denmark 4 (Damsgaard 49, Isaksen 58, 59, Norgaard 75) bt North Macedonia 0; Czech Republic 2 (Schick 27-pen, Krejci 86) drew with Republic of Ireland 2 (Parrott 19-pen, Kovar 23-og) - aet (Czech Republic win 4-3 on penalties).
Bolivia 2 (Paniagua 72, Miguel Terceros 79-pen) bt Suriname 1 (van Gelderen 48); New Caledonia 0 lost to Jamaica 1 (Cadamarteri 18).

Timeless Vision should redeem herself in the Donegal Plate

Hyderabad: The five-year-old mare Timeless Vision, who ran second in her last start, should redeem herself in the Donegal Plate, the main event of Saturday's (Mar. 28) races.

1 KRISHNA PLATE (1,100m), 4-y-o and upward, rated upto 25 (Cat. III), 3.00 p.m.: 1. Dhanadeepa (2) Mukesh K 60, 2. Golden Unicorn (5) P. Sai K 60, 3. Pinatubo (3) B.R. Kumar 60, 4. Most Beautiful (7) Akshay K 59.5, 5. Amboseli (8) Surya Prakash 57.5, 6. Muaser (9) P. Ajeeth K 57.5, 7. Battle On (1) Ajay K 54.5, 8. Iconic Star (4) Rafique Sk. 51.5 and 9. Tupac (6) B. Nikhil 51.5.
1. MOST BEAUTIFUL, 2. MUASER, 3. GOLDEN UNICORN

2 CRACK REGIMENT PLATE (1,200m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 3.30: 1. Linda (12) P. Ajeeth K 60, 2. Nyanza (9) Uday Kiran 58.5, 3. Arthisha (11) Mukesh K 58, 4. Catch The Worm (3) Akshay K 57, 5. Windsor (1) Surya Prakash 56.5, 6. Assured Success (2) P. Sai K 56, 7. Red Hot Punch (7) Ashad Asbar 56, 8. Nkalanzinzi (14) H.M. Akshay 54, 9. Taaliyah (6) Rafique Sk. 54, 10. Glimmer Of Hope (10) Gaurav 53.5, 11. Golden Inzio (8) Kuldeep Jr. 52, 12. December Rain (13) G. Naresh 51, 13. Hoping High (5) B. Nikhil 50.5 and 14. Rani Ruckus (4) Ajay K 50.
1. LINDA, 2. CATCH THE WORM, 3. RED HOT PUNCH

3 HIDDEN BLOOM PLATE (1,200m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 4.00: 1. Brilliant Lad (8) Yash Narredu 60, 2. Warwick (10) P. Ajeeth K 60, 3. Kalki (9) Rafique Sk. 59.5, 4. Coming Home (3) B.R. Kumar 53.5, 5. Mix The Magic (6) B. Nikhil 53, 6. Tootsie Darling (1) Trevor 53, 7. Mexican Wave (4) Akshay K 52.5, 8. Sweet Dancer (5) G. Naresh 52, 9. Only The Brave (2) Santosh Raj 51.5 and 10. Suryavanshi (7) Surya Prakash 51.5.
1. TOOTSIE DARLING, 2. BRILLIANT LAD, 3. MEXICAN WAVE

4 WANAPARTHY PLATE (1,400m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 4.30: 1. Fugo (2) Trevor 56, 2. Gold Touch (8) Yash Narredu 56, 3. Master Class (3) Gaurav 56, 4. Toshiro (4) Mukesh K 56, 5. Varttamaan (9) Kuldeep Sr. 56, 6. Digital Empress (5) Akshay K 54.5, 7. History Repeats (1) P. Sai K 54.5, 8. Love In Paris (7) Md. Ekram 54.5 and 9. Star Lit (6) G. Naresh 54.5.
1. FUGO, 2. GOLD TOUCH, 3. MASTER CLASS

5 DONEGAL PLATE (1,200m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 60 to 85 (Cat. II), 5.00: 1. Sugar (6) Ashad Asbar 60, 2. Ragnarök (7) Kuldeep Sr. 59.5, 3. Darling's Boy (14) B.R. Kumar 58, 4. Walking Thunder (10) Trevor 57.5, 5. Timeless Vision (2) Yash Narredu 57, 6. Calista Girl (12) Gaurav 56.5, 7. Azrinaz (4) P. Sai K 55.5, 8. Encore (8) Md. Ekram 54.5, 9. Runlikethewind (13) Kuldeep Jr. 54.5, 10. High Speed Divie (1) Rafique Sk. 54, 11. Romantic Grey (9) Abhay Singh 54, 12. Glorious Power (3) Santosh Raj 52.5, 13. Pacific Heights (5) Ajay K 52.5 and 14. Star Of Opera (11) Akshay K 52.
1. TIMELESS VISION, 2. WALKING THUNDER, 3. STAR OF OPERA

6 NALGONDA PLATE (1,400m) Maiden, 4-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 5.30: 1. La Fleuriere (9) Trevor 60, 2. La Quinta (6) Ajay K 59.5, 3. My Honey (7) Kuldeep Sr. 57.5, 4. Whistledown (8) P. Ajeeth K 57.5, 5. Konaseema (3) Akshay K 57, 6. Daring Spirit (10) P. Sai K 56.5, 7. Feel The Magic (2) Mukesh K 56.5, 8. Beech Wood (4) B. Nikhil 55.5, 9. Photograph (1) G. Naresh 55.5 and 10. Vedanta (5) Kuldeep Jr. 54.5.
1. LA FLEUERIERE, 2. LA QUINTA, 3. KONASEEMA

7 HIMAYAT SAGAR PLATE (1,400m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 6.00: 1. China Town (2) Trevor 60, 2. Dali's Destiny (7) Kuldeep Sr. 60, 3. N R I Ultrapower (5) H.M. Akshay 59, 4. Armstrong (4) Md. Ekram 58.5, 5. Rival (3) Yash Narredu 58, 6. Federer (8) Rafique Sk. 57.5, 7. Krystallos (9) P. Ajeeth K 57, 8. Rolls Royce (14) Abhay Singh 54.5, 9. Catchme If You Can (10) Mukesh K 53.5, 10. Fly Tothe Stars (12) Uday Kiran 53, 11. Hoping Star (11) G. Naresh 52, 12. Wolf Creek (1) Akshay K 52, 13. Shoolin (13) B. Nikhil 51 and 14. Tiger Ruby (6) Surya Prakash 50.5.
1. RIVAL, 2. CHINA TOWN, 3. WOLF CREEK

Day's Best: **TIMELESS VISION**
Jackpot: 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.
Mini Jackpot: (i) 1, 2, 3 & 4, (ii) 4, 5, 6 & 7.
Treble: (i) 2, 3 & 4, (ii) 5, 6 & 7.
Tanala: All races.

Chacarra, Jarvis take charge on rain-marred day

In focus: Jarvis held his own on Friday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

GOLF

Uthra Ganesan
GURUGRAM

Rain delays, bad light and an incomplete round were all no match for Eugenio Chacarra who dug deep, bringing all his experience on the course to go top of the leaderboard even as Indian golfers fell short in Round Two of the Hero Indian Open at the DLF Golf & Country Club here on Friday.

Play was delayed for almost an hour and half due to rain and bad light in the morning, pushing tee-offs and with the backlog piling up, the last group started as late as 2.20 p.m.

Play was called off around 6.40 p.m with 30 golfers still to complete their second round which will now continue on Saturday morning.

Chacarra, one shot adrift overnight, had four birdies and three bogeys for a fairly balanced round, topped off with an eagle on the 18th for a two day total of eight-under 136. He was followed closely by South African Casey Jarvis one stroke behind, MJ Daffue and round one leader Freddy Schott making the top-five.

Jarvis was the man of the moment with nine birdies through the day, his perfect round marred by a single bogey on the 4th to finish with an eight-under 64 for the day, the best performance over the first two days. Coming off two consecutive title wins this year, the 22-year-old Jarvis admitted he was high on confidence.

"The greens were a bit softer this morning, took advantage of that on my front nine.

"Then rain helped on the back nine. I'm just running on confidence at the moment. I think it's the perfect preparation (for Augusta)," Jarvis said.

Meanwhile with the cut projected at four-over, only two Indians – veteran Om Prakash Chouhan and 18-year-old Manoj S -- are expected to remain in action over the weekend even as USA's Akshay Bhatia hovered dangerously close, staying just over the mark with two holes to go.

Top scores (round two incomplete): 136: Eugenio Chacarra (Esp, 67-69); 137: Casey Jarvis (RSA, 73-64); 138: MJ Daffue (RSA, 71-67).
139: Freddy Schott (Ger, 71-67); 141: Nick Voke (NZ, 74-67), Matthew Baldwin (Eng, 72-69), Quim Vidal (Esp, 70-71).
143: Ewen Ferguson (Sco, 70-73), Darius Van Driel (Ned, 73-70), Andy Sullivan (Eng, 72-71), Yurav Premlall (RSA, 71-72), Ryan Peake (Aus, 71-72).
144: Tom Vaillant (Fra, 74-70), Dylan Fritelli (RSA, 71-73), Matteo Manassero (Ita, 72-72), Francesco Molinari (Ita, 72-72), Om Prakash Chouhan (Ind, 73-71).

In maiden IPL, Nabi wants to stay true to his strengths

With the 29-year-old in the prime of his career, a chance in the premier domestic T20 league couldn't have come at a more opportune moment

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

Few domestic cricketers in recent years have evoked as much curiosity about their craft as Auqib Nabi.

The pacer from Baramulla was wholly compelling in the recently concluded domestic season, helping Jammu & Kashmir win the Ranji Trophy for the first time ever with a chart-topping 60 scalps in 10 matches at an average of 12.56.

With the 29-year-old in the prime of his career, a chance in the Indian Premier League – he was picked up by Delhi Capitals for ₹8.4 crore in December's mini-auction – couldn't have come at a more opportune moment.

Although it is his propensity to move the red ball at will that has facilitated the added attention, it will be no less intriguing to track how Nabi copes with the demands of the world's most high-profile T20 league.

It is worth pointing out that he also impressed in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy – the domestic T20 meet – last season, accounting for 15 victims in seven outings.

Different ball game: It will be intriguing to track how Nabi, known for his red-ball prowess, copes with the demands of the IPL. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Simplicity

Nabi, true to his no-frills demeanour, stressed on simplicity when queried about his mantra with the ball across formats.

"My strength is that I swing the new ball and make early breakthroughs. At the back end, in T20, you need yorkers and slower balls. I am working on that with coaches. I won't veer away from my strengths. I keep things simple," Nabi said during a virtual interaction on Friday.

> Domestic cricket is also at a good level, but in the IPL, you won't expect to get away with a lot of mistakes

"Obviously, there will be expectations. But I am focusing on my work, and not giving a lot of attention to outside noise."

It is easier said than done, for the IPL, although still a domestic competition, is a considerable step-up from his assignments for J & K.

"The margin of error is less in the IPL," assessed Nabi. "Domestic cricket is also at a good level, but in the IPL, you won't expect to get away with a lot of mistakes. That is the difference between the IPL and domestic cricket."

Kochi gears up as international football returns to the city

ASIAN CUP QUALIFIER

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Kochi is gearing up for its date with international football after a decade-long gap. India takes on Hong Kong in an Asian Cup qualifier at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium on Tuesday.

Visitors arrive

The visitors arrived at Kochi on Friday. The Blue Tigers have already begun their practice sessions at the Kerala Blasters training facility in Tripunithura.

The last time the Indian team played in Kochi was in 2016 (World Cup qualifying match against Turkmenistan). The Kerala Football Association president, Navas Meeran, said the association didn't want to miss out on the opportunity to bring international football back to Kerala.

"That is why we took on the responsibility to host this match," Navas told *The Hindu*.

"The preparations are in full swing. And we do hope to get a crowd for the match, especially with three players from Kerala in the Indian squad."

Sahal Samad, Ashique Kuruniyan and Bijoy Varghese, however, could not take part in a press conference as scheduled. They were supposed to accompany coach Khalid Jamil for the press meet, but that could not go ahead, as the Greater Cochin Development Authority (GCDA) did not give permission to use the stadium as the KFA had failed to make the payment towards rent and security deposit.

Navas said the issue had been resolved. "It was just a technical issue, though there was fault from our side, too," he said.

"But incidents like this should not happen. Now, we are all looking forward to making the match a success."

All in readiness: The Blue Tigers sweat it out at the Kerala Blasters training facility in Tripunithura ahead of their match against Hong Kong. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Ashley Westwood.

Blasters appoint Westwood as coach

Sports Bureau
KOCHI

Kerala Blasters has appointed Ashley Westwood as the head coach till the end of the ongoing season of ISL Westwood will take charge of the team with immediate effect.

Westwood had a successful stint with Bengaluru FC during which he guided the team to two I-League titles and one Federation Cup triumph. Westwood also worked with ATK and Punjab FC as head coach. He was also the manager of the Afghanistan and Hong Kong national teams.

Blasters, meanwhile, confirmed that it had parted ways with David Catala via mutal agreement. Conditioning coach Aleex Mora and goalkeeping coach Ortiz Sanchez will also leave the club, said the club in a statement.

Stern test awaits Praggnanandhaa at Candidates

C. Shyam Sundar

The FIDE Candidates tournament 2026 begins in Paphos, Cyprus, on Saturday. Eight elite chess players each in the Open and women's sections will battle it out over 14 rounds to identify the challenger to the World champions.

R. Praggnanandhaa is the only Indian in the open event, which is a mix of experience and youth. He will be eager to go all the way and earn a shot at his compatriot D. Gukesh in the championship match later in the year.

However, it will be a tough task in a field that includes Americans Hikaru Nakamura and Fabiano Caruana, China's Wei Yi, Dutchman Anish Giri, German Matthias Bluebaum, Uzbek Javokhir Sindarov and Russian Andrey Esipenko.

Second appearance

The 20-year-old Praggnanandhaa, making his second appearance in the event, has won a number of elite invitational and open tournaments over the past two years, and could be a dangerous customer if he hits the right notes.

Praggnanandhaa. FILE PHOTO

Rating-wise Nakamura and Caruana may be the best in the field but the rest including Praggnanandhaa will fancy their chances. The women's tournament, being held simultaneously, will feature R. Vaishali and the fast-rising Divya Deshmukh alongside former World champion Tan Zhongyi, Kateryna Lagno, Aleksandra Goryachkina, Zhu Jiner, Bibisara Assaubayeva and Anna Muzychuk, a late replacement for Koneru Humpy.

The Indian ace decided not to travel owing to safety concerns in the wake of the West Asia conflict.

Humpy's withdrawal does rob the tournament of some of its class but there is still enough quality to provide intense contests. Vaishali, who performed brilliantly in the previous Candidates, has matured into an elite competitor and will be among the contenders if she starts well.

The tactically sharp Divya, the youngest player in the fray and the World Cup winner, will expect to put up a stiff fight.

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for rear fitment in Hero Splendor, HF Deluxe & Passion and Honda Shine, Dream & Livo.
Zapper C1 Scooter tyre is available in 90/100-10 TL size
for front & rear fitment across popular scooter models.
For details of BIS certification, please visit www.bis.gov.in
www.mrftyres.com | /mrfcorporate | /MRFWorldwide |
Zapper C1-U & C1 tyres are available at MRF TireTok Outlets
MRF T&S Outlets
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Multi-Brand Dealerships
IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON MRF DEALERSHIP: HOW TO IDENTIFY FALSE AGENCIES PRETENDING TO BE MRF RECRUITMENT AGENCIES FOR TYRE DEALERSHIP? Any person or institution asking for any kind of payment for an MRF Tyre Dealership is totally false. MRF never asks for any payment for Tyre Dealership. For Dealership Requests, please email to "write2us@mrftyres.com" or scan the QR Code. Approximate investment required for this prestigious and profitable business – Rs. 45 to 50 lakhs (expenditure to be incurred only after the candidate visits our District Office and is interviewed by our District Manager). The expenditure required is mainly for getting the shop ready for business and for stocking tyres which will happen only 2 or 3 days before inauguration.